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Washington University

International Affairs

Women War Correspondents and the Battles They Overcame to Succeed

By

Angela Mae Ness

A Thesis presented to the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
and University College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs

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Saint Louis, Missouri

In honor of those women war correspondents who inspire all women to push the boundaries and search for truth.

Dedicated to my family and friends, and my very brave thesis director, who travelled this path with me and continue to inspire me all the same.

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“The professional independent war correspondent, the unarmed civilian whose pen is supposed to be mightier than the sword”

~Harold Evans, former editor of *The Sunday Times*

Since wars began, there has always been a need to communicate to the people back home what is taking place. Political leaders use this need to conjure up support; families use it to keep hope that military men are alive. That herald has evolved into our modern day foreign war correspondents. These men and women march into danger to record the news and tell the truth about the wars. But it hasn't always been equal for the men and women. Men have had more privileges when it came to reporting overseas and have spent less time explaining why they are there compared to women. In addition, women war correspondents have had to sacrifice the family experience in a more severe way than non-working mothers. These sacrifices include less maternity leave and working with the guilt of being away from their families. In all, women war correspondents push harder to become successful in their fields since they are always starting from a lower starting point than most men on the newsroom ladder.

While men and women war correspondents undergo the same conditions in the field, there seems to be a common notion that the woman will not make it or be successful in catching the story. This is not true. This thesis will look at five women war correspondents from World War II through the 2003 Iraq War: Margaret Bourke-White, Virginia Irwin, Dickey Chapelle, Leslie Cockburn and Christiane Amanpour. Each woman embraced her own road to being a correspondent in a different, yet still courageous way. While it is not possible to say that they were necessarily better than their male colleagues, they certainly were told “no” far more often and saw more roadblocks in their way. However, in the face of each obstacle, these women grew

stronger and pressed past the negativity that tried to stop them. The work they created is extremely high quality and has stood up to scrutiny over the years.

It is important for young generations of women to understand these women and gain inspiration from their courageous endeavors. Without women like Bourke-White, Chapelle or Cockburn to lead the way, there would be a lack of experiences and equalities that women such as Soledad O'Brien at CNN, Katie Couric at CBS News and others have today. The lessons learned from their breaking of the rules under both the military's and editors' watch has made groundbreaking changes in how women are viewed when covering war.

Women have as much right to be covering war as men and are just as adept. These women can show that they are adaptable, they can keep up with political leaders, and they are fearless and unafraid to go after the story even when their lives are on the line. These women have become an inspiration to both men and women in covering war as a correspondent.

BACKGROUND

The notion of war correspondents dates back to early history. Tales of lore following the heroic deeds of men and women during war from throughout history come in the form of music, art, poetry, and classic stories. Homer wrote his epic, *The Iliad*, highlighting the Trojan War and its participants.¹ Leonardo DiVinci kept detailed accounts and depictions of weapons used in war during his lifetime, including some

¹ Homer, et. Al., *The Iliad*. (New York, N.Y., U.S.A.).

which were his own inventions.² The walls of art museums across the world hold artists' renderings of war as it happened in front of them. However, these men and women were not considered "war correspondents" per se. While they recorded the trials and tribulations of war, they merely preserved history. They did not always report the interactions of military and the public or recount exactly how a battle would later affect the countries who were participants.

In most recent times, war correspondents can be traced first to the Crimean War.³ Three men, William "Billy" Howard Russell of *The Times of London*, Edwin Lawrence Godkin of the *London Daily News* and G.L. Gruneisen of the *Morning Post*, gave their accounts of this war in which the Russian Empire fought the French, British and Ottoman alliances. Prior to these men writing for their respective newspapers, editors would reprint letters from military men in the battlefield, therefore acting as glorified public relations personnel for the military.⁴ Russell, of *The Times of London*, in covering the war as he travelled with the British military, commented that the English military management of the war was drastically different and poorer than the French management. He asked of his editor "Am I to tell these things, or hold my tongue?" in fear of appearing unpatriotic.⁵ When the editor gave his approval to do so, Russell's accounts of the war allowed the British public to read first-hand accounts of the inner-workings of the war, eventually leading to dissatisfaction with how it was being conducted.

² Vincent Finnan, "Leonardo Da Vinci Weapons of War," Leonardo Da Vinci Weapons of War, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.italian-renaissance-art.com/Da-Vinci-weapons.html>>.

³ Harold Evans, "Newseum War Stories: An Essay by Harry Evans," Newseum, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.newseum.org/warstories/essay/index.htm>>.

⁴ Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to Vietnam : The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, and Myth Maker* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975) 4.

⁵ Knightley 7.

Russell himself saw little of the actual battlefields, but instead questioned “every officer and soldier he could find and asked them to describe what had happened.”⁶ This important procedure would become the basis for most foreign war correspondents and a notion of journalism itself – to question all about an event. Russell’s articles about the war and conditions of the troops and artillery began to anger the public, leading to government officials asking him to be censured by *the Times*.⁷ However, his editor only allowed that he would “confine all [his] correspondents exclusively to the version of past events.”⁸ Thus began a conversation between governments and newspapers about what can or should be entered into public knowledge about the war effort. The beginnings of centuries of tension between the two started this incident with *the Times*. In fact, at the end of the war, the tension had grown so much that the army realized its mistake in allowing Russell to tag along with them for the war.⁹ Russell’s colleague Edwin Lawrence Godkin would write after the war:

...I cannot help thinking that the appearance of the special correspondent in the Crimea...lead to a real awakening of the official mind. It brought home to the War Office the fact that the public had something to say about the conduct of wars and that they are not the concern exclusively of sovereigns and statesmen.¹⁰

To aid the new profession of war correspondents, technology changes first surfaced during the Crimean War. To begin, the telegraph’s invention in the 1830s aided Russell in his ability to send his stories to London in a timely matter. In addition, Roger Fenton photographed the war as the first photojournalist to cover a war.¹¹ The invention

⁶ Knightley 9.

⁷ Knightley 12-13.

⁸ Knightley 13.

⁹ Knightley 17.

¹⁰ Knightley 17.

¹¹ Knightley 15.

of the camera allowed him to take firsthand photos of the war, but as he was first commissioned by the Royal Family, these photos tend to show a more glowing image of the war. However, the new mediums began a change in how war correspondents could quickly gather information and send it back to editors. In addition, photography brought a new “truth” to the story as the public could now see the war as never before. In the end, these technology updates helped Russell and a few others become the first handful of war correspondents. Less than five years later when the American Civil War started, over 500 war correspondents would show up to follow the Union side alone.¹²

As the first war correspondents were predominantly male, women did occasionally start to report on the war efforts and what they had seen. Russell’s first articles detailing the horrific nature of medical care on the battlefield led to the placement of women nurses, most notably Florence Nightingale whose letters often focused on the people of the war and how they were affected by the on-going battle.¹³ While most analogues of history focus on the men war correspondents through the mid-twentieth century, some female correspondents did emerge. In 1898, Kathleen “Kit” Blake Coleman covered the Spanish-American War for the *Toronto Mail* after having written articles for a column titled “Women’s Kingdom” for several years.¹⁴ Coleman’s articles covered mostly the aftermath of the war from a human perspective. She was not allowed to report the news on the frontlines; however her articles were widely popular because of

¹² Knightley 17.

¹³ Knightley 15.

¹⁴ Barbara M. Freeman, "FERGUSON, CATHERINE, Kit Coleman," Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, 2000, 18 Apr. 2012 <http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?id_nbr=7365>.

the quality of work she gave in covering the humans affected.¹⁵ More notable was the treatment she received from the American military. They considered Coleman's arrival to Cuba to be a stunt and tried to keep her out of the country. Coleman went on to spend "most of her 25 years as a journalist walking a creative tightrope between what was considered acceptable behaviour for a woman journalist and what was considered too daring,"¹⁶ an unfortunate theme that emerges from women war correspondents.

It is hard to compare the work of men and women war correspondents in the early time of the field. While men were allowed to focus on frontline battle stories and discuss military arrangements with top officials, women were asked by editors to focus more on the "human" stories – tales about the people, the culture, and the changes. Kathleen Coleman herself called this "guff."¹⁷ She wanted a chance to explore the war as men did and earn an honest and equal wage while doing so. Pre-suffragist workplace environments for women offered little equality for them to be seen as contributors on equal standing as men, a perception that still hadn't changed up through the 1970s. Women were to focus on the family and its affairs, not travel the world exploring how the government acted in foreign countries' conflicts. But these women saw the world in a different way from men. They saw opportunity and adventure, a way to seek truth, and a way to tell a story that was not being told.

In the post-suffragist movement, more women started to explore the career of war correspondent. Martha Gellman became a popular war correspondent after covering the

¹⁵ "Kathleen Blake Coleman," Library and Archives Canada, 19 Mar. 2008, 18 Apr. 2012
<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/public_mikan/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem>.

¹⁶ "Kathleen Blake Coleman"

¹⁷ "Kathleen Blake Coleman"

Spanish Civil War in 1937.¹⁸ Her work focusing on “war's civilian victims and those fighting to survive” earned her the respect of her male colleagues.¹⁹ But even Gellman wrote of her dispassion for the rivalry between the sexes when it came to business or life in general. “It’s all getting me down. I think it’s horrible to scare people about life merely because they are female and have the emotional make-up — in certain respects — of males, or what males supposedly have,” she wrote in 1931.²⁰ But she continued with her tenacity in search of the story. When the French declined to issue her papers into Spain, she travelled to the border between the countries and walked through unattended. She and Coleman paved the way for others like Margaret Burke-White, Virginia Irwin and Dickey Chapelle to begin their travels as war correspondents in search of truth for the public despite the gender roles of the early 20th century and pushback from government officials who would rather war correspondents not share all that is happening during conflict.

WOMEN IN THE FIELD

While women journalists seemed to get the less challenging stories in the early days of modern war corresponding, there has always been a danger to reporting during times of conflict. There are reports of harassment from enemies of state. Because journalists carry equipment and money, they can be seen as easy robbery victims. But perhaps women, by nature of being female, may be subject to more brutal crimes during

¹⁸ Linda D. Kozaryn, "Martha Gellhorn: War Reporter, D-Day Stowaway," Defense.gov. American Forces Press Service, 06 Mar. 1998, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=43102>>.

¹⁹ Kozaryn

²⁰ Stephen Amidon, "I Didn't like Sex at All," World War II, Salon.com, 12 Aug. 2006, Apr. 2012 <<http://www.salon.com/2006/08/12/gellhorn/>>.

their jobs reporting during conflicts. Reports of brutal assaults, rapes and murder occur in differing degrees when comparing female and male reporters.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) conducted a study in 2011 to talk to journalists who had been subjected to sexual assault while working overseas on assignments. The study interviewed over fifty journalists to learn about assault and its effects on journalists and their careers. The authors of the study found it hard to accurately track numbers as most assaults were not reported, but did find that when assaults happened, it was often severe and retaliatory in nature.²¹ The CPJ found that the assaults could be categorized into three types:

- targeted sexual violation of specific journalists, often in reprisal for their work;
- mob-related sexual violence against journalists covering public events; and
- sexual abuse of journalists in detention or captivity.”²²

Most disturbing is that these crimes are not reported for fear of further retribution both in the host country and from the home office. New York-based correspondent Jenny Nordberg was in Karachi, Pakistan in October 2007 when she was assaulted by a group of men while covering the story of Benazir Bhutto’s return to politics.²³ Nordberg didn’t tell of her assault until the study in 2011. “I did not tell the editors for fear of losing assignments. That was definitely part of it. And I just did not want them to think of me as a girl. Especially when I am trying to be equal to, and better than, the boys. I may have

²¹ Lauren Wolfe, "The Silencing Crime: Sexual Violence and Journalists," CPJ - Committee to Protect Journalists – Reports, 7 June 2011, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://cpj.org/reports/2011/06/silencing-crime-sexual-violence-journalists.php>>.

²² Wolfe

²³ Wolfe

told a female editor though, had I had one,” she said.²⁴ Fear of reprisal could lead not only to fewer crimes being disclosed when committed by foreign nationals, but also by colleagues or guides. Hiding assaults fosters an atmosphere of fear for the correspondent that many will not try to overturn.

Many of the women in the study described how situations quickly get out of control, especially in crowds where “mob mentality” reigns supreme during times of conflict. In February 2011, CBS News’ chief foreign correspondent, Lara Logan, was brutally attacked and sexually assaulted in Tahrir Square in Cairo while reporting on the uprising in Egypt.²⁵ She was separated from her group and the situation became precarious. This story is one of few that was headline news about the dangers of foreign war correspondents and put forward for the entire world to see. Logan would later add that CBS News’ support in helping her tell the truth assisted her. “The single most important thing a company can do is stand behind a journalist,” she said.²⁶ In light of this attack and others, many networks are now preparing reporters with ways to protect themselves overseas and implementing safety programs. However, even with her inspiration, the majority of cases are not brought forth for public consumption.

The intimidation of women doesn’t stop with just brutal assaults. Sexual harassment is common as well, even amongst a female correspondent’s own colleagues. An Iranian female journalist described the constant incidents, including a public official

²⁴ Wolfe

²⁵ Lisa De Moraes and Paul Farhi, “CBS News: Lara Logan Beaten and Sexually Assaulted in Egypt by Tahrir Square Mob.” The Washington Post, 16 Feb. 2011, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/15/AR2011021505870.html>>.

²⁶ Bill Sweeney, ed., Attacks on the Press in 2011: A Worldwide Survey by the Committee to Protect Journalists, Committee to Protect Journalists, 2012, 18 Apr. 2012 <http://cpj.org/attacks_on_the_press_2011.pdf>.

who put a hand on her thigh: “In this part of the world, it’s difficult to be a journalist. Because you’re a woman, there’s a kind of additional lever they can apply. You have a special vulnerability because you’re both a journalist and a woman.”²⁷ American laws are set in place to make sure the workplace is safe and comfortable for both women and men. However, these same rules cannot be applied outside the confines of an U.S. company, even if it sends workers overseas. In some places, particularly places in unrest, there is no way to rule or moderate this threat. Some women simply deal with this as part of the job. Kate Brooks, a freelance photographer who has published in *The New Yorker* and *The Wall Street Journal*, simply says, “It’s the way things are in the field.”²⁸

Furthermore, the threat of death has increased since the early 1900s. According to statistics from the Committee to Protect Journalists, since 1992, 905 journalists have been killed, with 6.7 percent, or 61 being female journalists.²⁹ These women were conducting jobs similar to men of the same. In February 2012, American journalist Marie Colvin, working for the British paper *The London Sunday Times*, was killed in Syria as she reported on the uprising and growing atrocities in Homs. In her own words, she believed in putting herself in danger:

Our mission is to speak the truth to power. We send home that first rough draft of history...In an age of 24/7 rolling news, blogs and twitters, we are on constant call wherever we are. But war reporting is still essentially the same — someone has to go there and see what is

²⁷ Wolfe

²⁸ Wolfe

²⁹ Committee to Protect Journalists Data compiled by author, See Appendix A

happening. You can't get that information without going to places where people are being shot at, and others are shooting at you.³⁰

Ultimately, her dedication to bringing the story back to others so that they could understand the atrocities and the horrors of war ended with her death. But the notion plays true for so many women in the field. They want to be there in the danger to be the first to tell the story and perhaps because they are women, they want to be certain that these horrible stories are shown to the world so that all can see what is being done to these children, women, and men, and that they are not swept to the side and forgotten, no matter the danger it presents to the journalist.

It can be argued that more men are in the profession, but with a growing number of women joining each year and competing for the same jobs, however dangerous, the number of deaths is sure to continue to grow. In fact, the CPJ recently documented how technology changes and reporting affect journalists in danger. In September 2011, Mexican journalist Maria Elisabeth Macias Castro was murdered and found with her keyboard and a place card depicting her social media screen name.³¹ Castro's reporting was mainly done through social media and even that brought danger, and ultimately death, to her in Mexico's drug-lord battle.

In addition, journalists are coming back from dangerous foreign assignments with a higher risk for mental-health related disorders. For example, journalists are at risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).³² A recent Neiman Report found that "data

³⁰ Vivienne Walt, "Syria: War Reporter Marie Colvin and Photographer Rémi Ochlik Are Killed," Time, 22 Feb. 2012, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2107394,00.html>>.

³¹ Sweeney

³² Anthony Feinstein and Mark Sinyor, "Women War Correspondents: They Are Different in So Many Ways," Nieman Reports, Winter 2009, 18 Apr. 2012

collected from a group of 218 frontline journalists who worked in zones of conflict for 15 years, on average, revealed rates of PTSD five times higher than those found in the general population.”³³ This unveils a whole other level of issues that foreign correspondents must deal with upon coming home. The stories may go off to editors, but the memories always remain. How can this not have a lasting effect on female journalists? The answer is that it may - and that is why they do it.

But what would make a woman go into such a dangerous profession? Who is the female journalist? There are many answers. On the CPJ website, *ProPublica*’s Kim Barker “described the women attracted to international journalism as ‘aggressive, assertive, strong’ with a ‘constant desire to prove ourselves, to show that we can play in that environment.’”³⁴ As will be seen later in this thesis, there tends to be a drive that nothing can stop these women. They want the stories that no one else can have or will go after. Photojournalist Margaret Bourke-White would write in her autobiography, “Nothing attracts me like a closed door.”³⁵

The Neiman Report looked at its database of journalists over the past 50 years or so and found similarities between the female war correspondents. First, more of the women were not married. This could be because they are constantly picking up from one place to another for stories.³⁶ In addition, with being in constant peril, one may not want to be thinking of children or others’ well-being. Second, women journalists tend to be

<<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/101967/Women-War-Correspondents-They-Are-Different-in-So-Many-Ways.aspx>>.

³³ Feinstein and Sinyor

³⁴ Wolfe

³⁵ Margaret Bourke-White, *Portrait of Myself* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963) 21.

³⁶ Feinstein and Sinyor

better educated than their male counterparts.³⁷ Whether this comes from a need to prove herself or not, the woman will acquire more degrees. It may also be thought that a woman needs to assume more education before working, however right or wrong this notion is in actuality. Third, the women were not more prone to PTSD than their male counterparts.³⁸ This preempts any debate about whether women cannot stand the trauma or perils of war. Since they are not any more prone, the thought that women are more subjected to mental issues following a war becomes a non-issue. Finally, the women drank equally, if not more, than their male counterparts.³⁹ In highly stressful circumstances, the women were not necessarily drunks, but could be seen as holding their own against the men. Since women, according to scientific studies, should not drink as much as men, this trait shows that the women war correspondents want to be seen as equals and will do something to see that the fact is known that they can keep up, no matter what.

This does not mean that all of these qualities must be met in order for a female to be a war correspondent. Leslie Cockburn, foreign correspondent for NBC News and later CBS News, was married with two young children at home when she went head to head with the State Department over the Iran-Contra Controversy. But, there is a common need for these women to seek the truth and travel the world until they find it. They do not let government, uprisings, traditional archaically feminine roles, the notion of danger, or editors stop them from completing their assignments or getting the story. This becomes an inspiration to young women everywhere, only starting the cycle over again.

³⁷ Feinstein and Sinyor

³⁸ Feinstein and Sinyor

³⁹ Feinstein and Sinyor

MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE

While Kit Coleman may have been one of the first women's correspondents, most scholars agree that Margaret Bourke-White is one of the first female war correspondents, as well as the first female photo journalist. Her courageous reporting of World War II through photography captured a sense of what men and women were truly doing in the war and could be found in one of the world's most popular magazines of the day, *Life*. She embodied fearless recklessness in a way that endeared her to many fans outside of the military.

Formative Years

Born on June 14, 1904, Margaret White was the daughter of Joseph White and Minnie Bourke. She had a strict upbringing with a strong emphasis on education, an ideal that would stay with her

throughout her life. At first, Bourke-White wanted to be a herpetologist, beginning her studies at Columbia University.⁴⁰ "Our home was always full of creatures waiting to be born. Mother and Father were interested in natural history, and I caught that interest with such lasting ardor that it nearly made a biologist of me instead of a photographer," she wrote in her autobiography.⁴¹

This fascination with the outdoor world would later be reflected in her first photographs for *Life* magazine. But in her adolescence, that initial interest perhaps helped



Margaret Bourke-White and
Getty Images / Walter Daran

⁴⁰ Susan Goldman Rubin, *Margaret Bourke-White: Her Pictures Were Her Life* (New York, NY: Abrams, 1999) 17.

⁴¹ Bourke-White 9.

forge a connection with her introverted father whom she cared for dearly. “My father was an abnormally silent man. He was so absorbed in he [sic] own engineering work that he seldom talked to us children at all, but he would become communicative in the world of out-of-doors,” she wrote of him. “He taught me the names of the stars, and how to distinguish the harmless snakes and pick them up without fear.”⁴²

Her fascination with photography was merely a hobby at first. She pursued photography while not studying during college. She never participated in the pastime as child. It wasn’t until her father’s death when she was 17 that she began to explore the hobby he loved so much. Bourke-White learned basic photography skills watching her father as he would turn their house into a photography laboratory of sorts. Some of her fondest possessions included photographs he took of himself and her mother during a favorite hobby of theirs, bicycling:

I am fortunate in having a charming photographic record of my parents during their cycling years, for Father was an enthusiastic photographer. The yellowed prints show a youthful version of the features I remember so well, my father with his high wide forehead, his burning, black, deep-set eyes with their permanently grace expression as though his thoughts were working far away in some distant private sphere of their own, as indeed they were; my mother unselfconsciously beautiful in her bell-shaped riding suit with the leg-of-mutton sleeves of her finely tucked shirtwaist with modest lace touches at the throat.⁴³

Bourke-White eventually started travelling with her father to work. In his job setting up rotary presses, he one day travelled to a plant in Duncellen, N.J. There, Bourke-White found the inspiration that would follow her throughout her photography career, and especially laid the foundation in her early days of camera work:

⁴² Bourke-White 9.

⁴³ Bourke-White 10.

I remember climbing with him to a sooty balcony and looking down into the mysterious depths below. ‘Wait,’ Father said, and then in a rush the blackness was broken by a sudden magic of flowing metal and flying sparks. I can hardly describe my joy. To me at that age, a foundry represented the beginning and end of all beauty.⁴⁴

Bourke-White’s first photograph session, when she opened her own studio in the 1920s in Cleveland, Ohio, would be of steel mills.⁴⁵ This was daring, as well as iconic as women of that time would never be found in such a dangerous and filthy place. Bourke-White wrote of this experience, mentioning that “Cautious inquiries produced the discouraging information that women were unwelcomed in steel mills, especially in these particular mills, where they had been prohibited ever since a visiting school teacher years earlier had inconsiderately fainted from the heat and fumes.”⁴⁶

Personal Life

Bourke-White married twice. First there was Everett Chapman, known as “Chappie”⁴⁷ She met Chappie at the University of Michigan in 1922. By Bourke-White’s own admission, they quickly “fell in love so fast there wasn’t time to breathe.”⁴⁸ He was studying electrical engineering. On Friday, June 13, 1923, the couple married. Two short years later, the marriage ended. It failed following a tumultuous experience with her mother-in-law in which the woman cried that Bourke-White had taken her son from her and she never wanted to see Bourke-White again.⁴⁹ Bourke-White would later write about her mother-in-law, “As I look back, I believe this beautiful rather tragic woman

⁴⁴ Bourke-White 12.

⁴⁵ Patrick Cox, "Margaret Bourke-White - History Making Photojournalist and Social Activist," *The Digital Journalist*, Jan. 2003, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://digitaljournalist.org/issue0301/pcox.html>>.

⁴⁶ Bourke-White 24.

⁴⁷ Rubin 20.

⁴⁸ Bourke-White 17.

⁴⁹ Rubin 20.

was the greatest single influence in my life. I am grateful to her because, all unknowing, she opened the door to a more spacious life than I could ever have dreamed.”⁵⁰

Following her first divorce, Bourke-White found herself wanting to finish her education. She travelled to Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. for classes. In addition, she found an old camera that she had along with a new curiosity for it. This camera was a 3-1/4x4-1/4 Reflex with a crack through the lens.⁵¹ Using this camera, she started taking pictures of the campus. “I was surprised at the growing feeling of tightness I had with a camera in my hands,” she wrote.⁵² Following graduation and having made the decision to go back to Cleveland to find work, Bourke-White opened her own studio. For the next several years, she photographed mostly architectural buildings around the Cleveland area in hopes of creating a portfolio attractive enough to persuade the steel mills to permit her to photograph inside their small worlds. Eventually, a chance job with Union Trust Bank allowed her to persuade the bank president to intercede on her behalf with a contact of his at Otis Steel, one of the mills in the area.⁵³ He agreed, and eventually, Otis Steel officials allowed her to photograph the mills at night, even while questioning why a young woman would want to do such a thing.

The idea that a woman should not be working on her career was a common theme during Bourke-White’s time. Women were not expected to push the boundaries of conventional societal norms. Even Bourke-White questioned why she did not stay married and instead pursued a career in photography:

⁵⁰ Bourke-White 20.

⁵¹ Bourke-White 20.

⁵² Bourke-White 21.

⁵³ Bourke-White 33.

People seem to take it for granted that a woman chooses between marriage and a career as though she were the stone statue on the county courthouse, weighing one against the other in the balance in her hand. I am sure this is seldom so. Certainly in my own case there was no such deliberate choice. Had it not been for [my marriage ending], I would never have been a professional photographer.⁵⁴

Professional Life

Photography itself was considered to be for men, especially for the experimental and industrial photography that Bourke-White took upon herself to conduct. She would even be questioned if the photographs she took were hers, especially when the subjects of such photos were shot from difficult angles or locations. For example, nearing graduation from Cornell, Bourke-White brought several photographs to an architectural firm she was referred to. She wanted to see if she had the talent to pursue photography as a career, or if she should continue with her plans in studying herpetology. She was given the name, Benjamin Moskowitz, an associate in the firm, and asked him to review her work. According to Bourke-White, the conversation went as follows:

Mr. Moskowitz glanced at the picture on top, a view of the library tower.

"Did you take this photograph?" he asked.

"Yes, that's what I've been telling you." she answered.

"Did you take it yourself?" he asked again, apparently not believing that a photograph of that skill could be taken by a woman.⁵⁵

This interchange shows the disbelief of a man that a woman could do such stunning work. Bourke-White left that meeting with the approval of the associates that she could have a job in photography, although approval from men is not what she wanted, it ultimately paved the way for her to follow her dreams to Cleveland and set up

⁵⁴ Bourke-White 20.

⁵⁵ Bourke-White 22-23.

her own studio once she graduated from college. From this studio work she would go on to *Fortune* magazine and finally *Life* magazine for which she would cover World War II. "Becoming whom she did in a male dominated world made her achievements only more legendary," wrote author Sean Callahan around the time of her death.⁵⁶

In mid-1929, following her work in the steel mills, Bourke-White received a telegram to go to New York to meet with Henry R. Luce, the editor of *Time* magazine. He had seen her award-winning steel mill photographs and had an offer for her, to be the photographer for a new business and industry magazine he was starting that would integrate pictures with written content.⁵⁷ The new magazine would be named *Fortune*, and Bourke-White started working on it immediately. Her first assignments took her to shoe-making and glass-blowing factories. The first cover story that she would shoot for the magazine would be the Swift meat-packing plant in Chicago, photographing hogs as they were slaughtered. It was a particularly grueling story. Her writer, Parker Lloyd-Smith, could not endure the stench during one visit and had to leave while she continued taking photographs. "He had a long wait," she wrote, "for the yellow light had low actinic value and I had to make time exposures." Yet, Bourke-White remained inside to finish what she had started.

A few years after starting at *Fortune*, the editors asked her to complete an overseas assignment. The Soviet Union had been fairly secretive since implementing its first Five-Year Plan. With no foreign reports allowed on U.S.S.R soil, Bourke-White wanted to be the first. She wrote of her eagerness. "With my enthusiasm for the machine

⁵⁶ Sean Callahan, "Margaret Bourke-White - About the Author," Scout Productions, 1998, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.scoutproductions.com/mbwhite/ap.html>>.

⁵⁷ Rubin 35.

as an object of beauty, I felt the story of a nation trying to industrialize almost overnight was just cut out for me. Peasants who had been taken from the plow and put on the punch press - how did they manage this jump of centuries?"⁵⁸ Upon learning that a visa would be waiting for her in Germany to get her into the Soviet Union, Bourke-White immediately flew to the country. However, she was surprised to learn that no such visa existed, nor had anyone heard of her. So, she continued to apply for one for over five and a half weeks.⁵⁹ Eventually, the Soviet government granted her a visa and she was permitted to enter the country to take photographs. It is so meaningful that she would be allowed to photograph events in the Soviet Union at such a time not spoken about much in world history. This turbulent era would eventually lead up to the most devastating war the world has even seen, followed by an era of unprecedented growth. Her pioneering photographs and reporting foreshadowed a race to build a modern society between the United States and the Soviet Union. In her later writings about this time, even Bourke-White would remark on this fact. "The Soviets were still a long way from the Amerikanskoe tempo, but with the *piatiletka*, the Five-Year Plan, Russia was entering a technological race, with the United States as the principal contender," she wrote.⁶⁰ This unprecedented look into the new industrial age of the Soviet Union was only one of many closed doors that Bourke-White would push open. She never let much stop her.

She continued with *Fortune* for six years, shooting the logs in St. John's Lake, the Chrysler Building construction and other assorted industry stories before leaving the magazine to start with a new venture by Henry Luce. This would be a new magazine,

⁵⁸ Bourke-White 61.

⁵⁹ Bourke-White 62.

⁶⁰ Bourke-White 64.

Life. She was immediately sent to Billings, Mont. where she shot the first cover for the magazine, a rarity that a woman would do so in those days. The picture of the Fort Peck Dam, located on the Missouri River, debuted on Nov. 23, 1936, to showcase a work of the New Deal program.⁶¹ She was one of four photographers, and the only woman, so she often had to stand her ground to get what she wanted. "Usually I was the only woman photographer, and the technique I followed was to literally crawl between the legs of my competitors and pop my head and camera up for part of a second before the competition slapped me down again," she wrote.⁶²

In 1939, Bourke-White was married again, this time to writer, Erskine Caldwell.⁶³ During their long honeymoon, they travelled to the Soviet Union, where the non-aggression pact was just beginning to dissolve. This pact, between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, assured that the Soviets would not help Poland when it was invaded by the Germans in 1939. The pact fell apart in 1941 with Germany's surprise attack against the Soviet Union. Against suggestions to leave the country, Bourke-White wanted to stay and photograph the beginnings of war for Russia. She was on top of the American Embassy the night German Nazi bombers hit it. She barely escaped injury, going below seconds before the bombs hit. She wrote of a great sense of urgency to move from the roof that evening: "I cannot tell what it was that made me know the bomb of the evening was on its way. It was not sound and it was not light, but a kind of contraction in the atmosphere which told me I must move quickly."⁶⁴

⁶¹ "Fort Peck Dam Cover." (*Life* Magazine 23 Nov. 1936).

⁶² Bourke-White 96.

⁶³ Cox

⁶⁴ Bourke-White 118.

War Photographer

By 1942, Bourke-White would find herself divorced once again, and looking to throw herself into work. Her husband wanted to go to Hollywood where he had lucrative film offers; she wanted to focus on World War II. *Life* worked out an agreement where she would work with the U.S. Air Forces.⁶⁵ She would be given a uniform – made by Abercrombie & Fitch. In addition, she would receive pay. “War correspondents had what is known as assimilated rank, which entitled them to officers' mess and officers' pay - except you had to be captured to collect the officers' pay,” she wrote.⁶⁶ She was assigned to a bomber group, “The Flying Flitgun” and began photographing them. However, she was not allowed to go on actual missions with them. “To be a woman in a man's world,” as people often phrase it, is usually - I have found - a distinct advantage. There are a few exceptions, and my present difficulty was a classic example. In a combat situation, men tend to overprotect, and no overprotected photographer, male or female, can get pictures by remote control,” she wrote.⁶⁷ Eventually, the ban was lifted for men journalists to go on flights. Women were still not permitted. She thought her chance would come when General Jimmy Doolittle was appointed commanding general of the Eighth Air Force, but he denied her request as well. Senior U.S. officers agreed she would be assigned to a ship instead.

It was on this ship in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea that Bourke-White was a passenger of a torpedoed vessel. On a lifeboat, Bourke-White would watch the ship sink in the middle of the night, silently lamenting the fact that there was little light to

⁶⁵ Bourke-White Pg 132.

⁶⁶ Bourke-White Pg 132.

⁶⁷ Bourke-White 135.

fully capture the event on camera. By morning, she was able to take pictures with her small camera of the survivors and the rescuers.⁶⁸ It was following this incident that she met again with Doolittle. He questioned if she still wanted to go on a bombing mission, to which she answered, "Yes." "Well, you've been torpedoed. You might as well go through everything," Doolittle said.⁶⁹

Bourke-White would spend weeks training in preparation to be allowed on a combat mission. In addition, she had to learn how to work her cameras in the high altitude as the men would not be able to help her on her missions. This special training was helpful as the cameras she was using were heavier, and in the cold, high elevation, she would need to maneuver with gloves to keep warm. She was also trying to build rapport with the crew, to little success, "I did not know till later that the crew members had placed bets on me. If we were attacked, would the waist gunner knock me out so that he could defend our airplane, or would I knock out the waist gunner so I would have room to take pictures?" she wrote.⁷⁰ On Jan. 22, 1943, Bourke-White set out on her first bombing mission. She successfully photographed the bombing of an enemy airfield. The bombers forgot there was a woman on board.⁷¹

Bourke-White's courage was matched by her willingness to see every project through to completion. She always wanted to find the truth and capture it. "...The love of truth, which is requisite No. [1] for a photographer," she wrote.⁷² In addition, she had the need to explore, to never sit in one place. She roamed the world seeking these new

⁶⁸ Bourke-White 145.

⁶⁹ Rubin 10.

⁷⁰ Bourke-White 153.

⁷¹ Bourke-White 156.

⁷² Bourke-White 15.

adventures because of something deep inside that couldn't be kept in one place. "I decided to be a herpetologist and become so much of an expert that I would be sent on expeditions and have a chance to travel. I knew I had to travel," she wrote.⁷³ Bourke-White would continue doing so until Parkinson's disease ravaged her in the 1950s. She knew, with no husband or children, her colleagues at *Life* Magazine would take care of her and began cataloguing her work. She hadn't done so during her career, nor had she taken the time to prepare for retirement. She would always want to do what she loved doing - travelling the world taking pictures that inspired her. She died in 1971.⁷⁴

DICKEY CHAPELLE

In a heart-wrenching first for a woman war correspondent, Dickey Chapelle has the distinction of being the first killed in action while reporting for the *National Observer* during the Vietnam War. Ever the adventurous explorer, she wanted to be where the action took place, and on November 4, 1965, she became part of the stories she loved to cover.

Formative Years

Dickey Chapelle was born Georgette Meyer in Shorewood, Wis., on March 14, 1919.⁷⁵ She had a younger brother, Bob, with whom she claimed to find the ability to



Dickey Chapelle
Wisconsin Historical Society

⁷³ Bourke-white 9.

⁷⁴ Rubin 89.

⁷⁵ "Dickey Chapelle," Topics in Wisconsin History, Wisconsin Historical Society, 18 Apr. 2012
<<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/topics/chapelle/>>.

rebel early in life.⁷⁶ However, she found one person she couldn't rebel against, her father. A salesman by trade, he would take Chapelle on his building construction projects, teaching her to walk across the high and dangerous beams. “ ‘You won't fall, I promise, if you don't look down. Look ahead,’ he said,” she wrote. “I've since applied his advice to logs over rivers, ropes over chasms, cargo nets down ship sides, parachutes, front lines and assorted abstractions and it hasn't let me down yet. No, I couldn't rebel against Dad.”⁷⁷ There is no doubt this training early in life helped her in her abilities later in her career to capture the most daring of stories by becoming one of the military.

Chapelle adored and found a role model in explorer and then Commander Richard Evelyn Byrd, the leader of the South Pole expedition.⁷⁸ Her adoration of Byrd came one afternoon at the movies in her early teens when she saw a picture of his explorations. “The picture that week was from Admiral Byrd's first expedition to the South Pole. It hypnotized me. I came home in a daze and announced I was going to be an aerial explorer,” she wrote. “Being a girl might slow me down a little, but there was no other reason not to follow in his footsteps. The first thing I'd do would be to learn to fly. . . .”⁷⁹

Her mother disapproved of this plan and immediately decided she should be a writer – something that Chapelle found to be less than desirable. Chapelle resolved to find a way around this and applied for scholarships at Purdue University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to learn to design airplanes.⁸⁰ However, because

⁷⁶ Dickey Chapelle, *A Combat Reporter's Report on Herself What's A Woman Doing Here?* (New York: William Morrow &, 1962) 18 Apr. 2012
<http://archive.org/stream/whatsawomandoing013581mbp/whatsawomandoing013581mbp_djvu.txt>.

⁷⁷ Chapelle

⁷⁸ Roberta Ostroff, *Fire in the Wind: The Life of Dickey Chapelle* (New York: Ballantine, 1992) 28.

⁷⁹ Chapelle

⁸⁰ Chapelle

this was during the Great Depression, she needed to raise additional funds. She had started reading aviation trade magazines and by chance had written a letter to the editor of The United States Air Services magazine, Earl N. Findley.⁸¹ He answered her letter with a simple question, “But why do you want to fly?” Chapelle replied with a nine-page answer, which amused Findley. He sent her a check for \$7.50 and published her letter. Chapelle would write that because of this exchange she was “...secretly thrilled at the sight of the words in print... It turned out I had a skill on which I could live, in theory at least.”⁸²

She would attend MIT, but found it challenging. While in classes, she longed to be exploring Boston. She even befriended the officers at Navy Yard who let her go to the yard on Monday mornings to learn how the ship turbines were being built.⁸³ She eventually started helping. While learning at the Navy Yard, she wrote a story on the flight techniques used, even selling some to *The Boston Traveler* newspaper. However, in the end she failed to receive the credits needed to continue at MIT and was asked to leave.

Faced with no college options and now unemployment, Chapelle needed to find a new way to support herself. The Curtiss Wright airport in Baltimore, Md, hosted an air show every Sunday. While on her new self-discovery for a paying job, she attended several air shows. She then figured out that the air show had a job for her. She offered to type letters in return for flying lessons a few times a week, but nearsightedness proved

⁸¹ Chapelle

⁸² Chapelle

⁸³ Chapelle

she would never be a great flight student.⁸⁴ Later that same year, she accompanied her grandparents as they moved to Florida where writing became front and center in her life.

Professional Life

While running errands, Chapelle discovered an air show, the Tenth Annual Miami All- American Air Maneuvers, was in town. Ever enamored with the airshows, she rushed to see how she could help. The airshow's publicist asked if she could write about the show. When Chapelle answered "Yes", he offered her a city editor position with the show to write press releases.⁸⁵

Through this job, she went on her first overseas assignment, escorting six Miss Miami Aviations to Havana. In Cuba, Chapelle learned about the culture, something she would use later when she was writing about the Fidel Castro underground in the United States in the 1950s. However, this first trip allowed her to understand her dream to be part of the press. While watching an airshow in Havana, a plane crashed. Upon reaching the sobering wreckage and then walking back towards her hotel, she realized that she needed to tell this story:

Could any cold sentence like the one I'd just composed be a proper requiem for the warm human being who had elected to take that final, fatal chance because his pride was more important than his survival?

The answer came to me like a cold wind blowing from the city room in Boston. Yes. It was. I could sentimentalize all I wanted, I could go on any emotional jag that pleased me after I had filed the story. But nobody would even know he was dead if I didn't do that. Now.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ http://archive.org/stream/whatsawomandoing013581mbp/whatsawomandoing013581mbp_djvu.txt

⁸⁵ http://archive.org/stream/whatsawomandoing013581mbp/whatsawomandoing013581mbp_djvu.txt

⁸⁶ Chapelle

She quickly wrote the story and telephoned the *New York Times* office in Havana. Another reporter in Havana who worked for the *Times* told a friend, Theon Wright, the United Press aviation editor for Transcontinental and Western Air, later Trans World Airlines, about her story. After conferring with her, he offered her a position in the press office and asked her to be in New York within 10 days. It was 1939, and World War II was looming in the near future.

It was at this time that Chapelle met her future husband, Tony Chapelle, a photographer with Trans World Airlines. From him, Chapelle learned the basics of photography, a skill that would later aid her in reporting from combat zones. "I learned to take pictures using a 4 x 5-inch Speed Graphic augmented by a leather shoulder-case weighing at least 20 pounds," she wrote of the technology she began using.⁸⁷ With this skill, she wasn't beholden to a photographer. She could go out and capture the picture along with her story. "You have to be able to write, too, so you can do captions. But the picture is your reason for being. It doesn't matter what you've seen with your eyes. If you can't prove it happened with a picture, it didn't happen," Tony Chapelle would say to her.⁸⁸ They married on Oct. 2, 1940.⁸⁹

Following her wedding, Chapelle tried to work for magazines such as *Life* and *Look*, but with little success.⁹⁰ But this did not faze her. She continued to seek out photo stories, finally settling on the Brewster Aircraft plant in Newark, N.J. There, the company would modify planes for World War II to send to Britain. Following three

⁸⁷ Chapelle

⁸⁸ Chapelle

⁸⁹ Don Haines, "COMBAT Magazine: One Helluva Woman," COMBAT Magazine, Summer 2006, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.combat.ws/S3/BAKISSUE/CMBT04N3/DICKEY.HTM>>.

⁹⁰ Chapelle

weeks of taking photographs, Chapelle took her story back to *Look*, which bought the story. This was the beginning of her relationship with the magazine. She would follow this story up with one about “American pilots enlisting in the Canadian Air Force” to fight in the war.⁹¹ She became the first female correspondent with access to these bases.

War Correspondent

In December 1941, tragedy hit the United States as the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the country found itself in the middle of World War II. Chapelle’s husband enlisted in the Navy and was sent to Panama. Since she couldn’t follow as a Navy wife, Chapelle asked *Look* to send her to write a story on the preparations for war. *Look* appealed to the War Department on her behalf for papers to let her cover the Fourteenth Infantry Regiment. Chapelle described her interaction to get these papers:

Colonel Dupuy had only one question. “I see that recognition has been applied for you in part so you may photograph the training of the Fourteenth Infantry Regiment in the jungles of Panama. I presume you realize, Mrs. Chapelle, that troops in the field have no facilities for women?” The classic military semantics the I-presume-you-realize wording was never more just. I’d not only failed to realize it; I’d never given it a minute’s thought. I had no answer ready and stood dumb. Frantically my mind went to what I knew of the what was it again? Fourteenth Infantry? “Colonel,” I said earnestly, “I’m sure the Fourteenth Infantry has solved much tougher problems than that, and they’ll probably think of a way to lick this one, too”⁹²

Chapelle seemed to always rush into a battle or problem with little regard for what would be needed to survive; only what she needed to write the story. Similar to Bourke-White, she would stop at nothing to get the story, even going where women had traditionally not gone before.

⁹¹ Haines

⁹² Chapelle

Even when she was onboard a ship military officials had difficulty with her status as a female reporter. Upon learning that she would leave port one day, she sent a telegram to her husband with the words “No more mail, love Dickey.”⁹³ This had been a code they had set up in case one needed to leave suddenly. Upon returning from her time at sea, Chapelle was arrested by Naval Intelligence. Chapelle questioned how her telegram could have harmed the mission or given privileged information to the enemy, but was informed it was more about how the men in the military were acting knowing she was on that ship:

“It isn't what the wire could have told the enemy,” was the answer. “But do you realize what it did tell your husband's buddies? They've been volunteering to fly extra missions every day and night for two solid weeks to herd that ship of yours into this harbor. And he with them. Now that you're here, maybe we can put the whole patrol wing back on some kind of normal military operation!”⁹⁴

More so than keeping in line with the military men, she needed to be cautious of the censor as she had two specific tasks while covering the war, to cover the Panama Canal Zone for *Look*, and also reporting for a local daily newspaper, the *Panama American*. However, the war stories that she found often had details that the military censors did not want known to the public. One example was submarine warfare. “...My euphoria had not lasted. The only part of the war going on around me was the terrible struggle against Nazis U-boats and hardly a line of that story would escape the censor's blue pencil until the world was at peace again,” she wrote.⁹⁵ Her daily battles were more against the military and what she could or could not do than being a female by that point.

⁹³ Chapelle

⁹⁴ Chapelle

⁹⁵ Chapelle

In 1944, Chapelle and her husband were back in the states waiting orders for new assignments, Tony's from the military and Chapelle's from any magazine that would send her out to cover the war. She had sold some stories about women in wartime jobs to two magazines from Fawcett Publications, *Woman's Day* and *Popular Mechanics*.⁹⁶ The managing editor, Ralph Daigh, quickly approved for her to go to the Pacific corridor to follow the action there. Chapelle marveled at how quickly her accreditation was turned around at this point and by the process itself, a pseudo-enlistment similar to that of Bourke-White's in the 1940s:

This accreditation business is of the greatest importance in wartime to a reporter or a photographer (or a reporter- photographer as I was). It's not enlistment. The correspondent goes right on being paid by his publication. But the service Army, Navy, Air Force agrees to see that the correspondent is housed, fed, uniformed, transported and shown whatever is necessary. The services give this cooperation so the correspondent will at least be able to write stories useful to the prosecution of the war as well as satisfactory to his editors.

In return for adopting him or her, the military forces ask one commitment from the correspondent. The reporter agrees in writing to take orders. The custom is to treat a correspondent as a kind of junior officer, calling the status he doesn't legally have a simulated rank. In 1945, we were simulated captains in the Army and lieutenant commanders in the Navy.⁹⁷

In order to properly be in the same area of the war, but still under the protection of the military, Bourke-White and Chapelle gave up some of their independence and freedom to conduct a story as they perhaps may want to for the greater good – being part of the larger story, or being close enough to the military to obtain the story as it happens. This is not unlike a state that gives up some sovereignty to join a larger organization, for

⁹⁶ Chapelle

⁹⁷ Chapelle

example, those European states that give up some control over their governments to join the European Union. In the end, it is all to serve with the best of intentions.

As Chapelle was sent out from San Francisco to cover the war in the Pacific, she encountered a strange query from an officer on whether she wanted to be a writer or photographer “on operations.”⁹⁸ She was informed she could be one or the other, but not both. Chapelle inquired how many women writers were being sent out from San Francisco and was told a few. When she asked about women photographers, she was told none. Then she was asked a question that completely surprised her. “And just where was it you wanted to go?” the officer asked. “As far forward as you’ll let me,” Chapelle replied.⁹⁹ For a woman full of gumption like Chapelle, this was a simple answer. Chapelle would be sent to Guam, the first of American women in the armed forces to be allowed to be past Honolulu. But as Chapelle would remark, the women being sent to Guam “would have been news if there had not been just one story in the whole area.”¹⁰⁰ A few days after being in Gaum, Chapelle got the orders she had been waiting to receive. She boarded the U.S.S. Samaritan, a medical ship going to aid wounded Marines.

Her first day on the ship involved finding where to go if the ship ever encountered enemy fire and setting up new routines. Although with some disbelief that an attack could happen against a medical ship, per the Geneva Convention of 1929, Chapelle chose to be on the highest point on deck to photograph what would happen.¹⁰¹ She described

⁹⁸ Chapelle

⁹⁹ Chapelle

¹⁰⁰ Chapelle

¹⁰¹ Chapelle

what would eventually become a “going-to-bed routine” that she would complete every time she was in any war zone in the future:

I reloaded the camera and padded it between extra pillows on the floor so it would have some protection against detonation. I hung my helmet and life belt where I could reach them and then rehearsed with my eyes closed how to find them by feel. I lay down, loosened the web belt of my khaki slacks, made sure my shirt wouldn't choke me and buried my face in my arm.¹⁰²

The routine served her well as she awoke to blaring alarms indicating that an enemy ship had been sighted and to prepare for engagement. Chapelle began her journey to her security station with some trepidation:

I walked toward the wide hatch that opened from the wardroom onto the main deck. At the high doorsill, the sense of the words hit me. I froze. Over and over my mind kept repeating, I-do-not-want-to-go- out-there. I-do-not-want-to. Behind me, a seaman's voice rang young and clear in the stillness. "Photographers are crazy."

That was what it took. As long as one person thought I was a photographer, I was willing to take the next step toward being one. But out on deck, it got harder not easier.

The sun was bright, the sea was bare and blue, the decks of the ship were utterly, desolately, lacking any sign of another human being.¹⁰³

Despite her own misgivings and feelings, Chapelle was the only one on deck to see the enemy plane fire its first bomb, miss and then return to attempt its attack again. However, before it could do so, a Navy destroyer shot at the plane, scaring it away. Chapelle did not take any decent photographs of the attack as she did not have a telephoto lens with her at the moment, but she was still the first on the ship to take a position of carelessness to get a story, no matter the cost to her own safety. Everyone else was well below deck.

¹⁰² Chapelle

¹⁰³ Chapelle

On Iwo Jima, Chapelle took pictures of wounded and dying men as they came aboard the ship for medical care, or to die in peace away from the war-torn beaches. Some men talked to her, some did not. And a few inspired her. Chapelle wrote of one Marine brought on the ship in such a state that the chaplain was administering last rights. The Marine, however, looked at her and asked:

“Hey, who you spyin' for?” “The folks back home, Marine,” she replied. “The folks-back home-huh? Well-fuck the folks back home,” he told her before closing his eyes once again.¹⁰⁴

Chapelle wrote that his voice “haunted” her and that “his story probably is one of the reasons I've kept on being a chronicler of wars.”¹⁰⁵ With one moment, Chapelle had a reason to continue a career that would put her in touch with many more military men, and she would be the one to tell their stories, but she wanted to tell more than just the story of the wounded.

Here, among the wounded and dying men, Chapelle learned two things about being a war correspondent. First, she learned what she could and could not report. There were a group of Japanese prisoners on the boat from Iwo Jima who had been severely wounded, but were being taken care of by the doctors on board. To mention this to anyone could have sent Chapelle to jail.¹⁰⁶ The military felt that if the soldiers onboard the ship knew that it was carrying these Japanese POWs, they would riot and try to kill them. For a reporter looking to tell the truth, and report the stories of this ship, to sit on a story, especially one involving the enemy must have been difficult. However, this again goes back to the fact that Chapelle agreed to give up some of her rights to be with the

¹⁰⁴ Chapelle

¹⁰⁵ Chapelle

¹⁰⁶ Chapelle

military in the Pacific. She agreed to follow their orders. Second, Chapelle learned what she believed made men fight in wars such as this one. It alludes to her earlier conversation with the Marine who did not hold the public back home in high esteem. Chapelle had questioned why he would be fighting, and learned her answer much later after he had passed away. She wrote that she ultimately determined that one notion factored into the reason men would fight in wars:

It was my first and most terrible encounter with the barrier between men who fight, and those for whom the poets and the powers say they fight. I thought then, if a man didn't die for the folks back home, what else was there? For this, I was going to search with my whole heart. For surely this was the most powerful of all forces. A long time was to pass before I was sure of the answer, but then I knew I'd been right that it was the most powerful force. In a word, love.

I believe a man goes into combat for the defense of the folks back home. But no country, no slogan, no edict, no law, no global pronouncement, no parliamentary decision is ever what he dies for. He dies for the man on his right or his left. He dies exposing himself so that they or all of them may live, often in that order. Greater love hath no man. And there isn't any other word.¹⁰⁷

She would spend her career searching for this answer, but even after finding it, she still pushed on to record the images and capture the words of men in the midst of battles fought on foreign soil, all to seek the truth. This was with little regard to herself.

While on Iwo Jima, Chapelle encountered questions about her status as a woman photographer and also her training in a combat zone. When she first arrived, a Marine lieutenant questioned her. “How the hell did you get here? We sure didn’t expect to see a woman,” he said.¹⁰⁸ After responding that she was the civilian correspondent assigned to photograph the Marines, he agreed to take her to the front lines. However, there Chapelle

¹⁰⁷ Chapelle

¹⁰⁸ Chapelle

showed her lack of knowledge about military protocols. While trying to take pictures, she climbed a tall ridge without asking questions of the lieutenant. For over 10 minutes she stood at the top taking pictures at all the compass points before climbing down, only to come face-to-face with a screaming lieutenant. “Do you realize all the artillery and half the snipers on both sides of this fucking war had ten full minutes to make up their minds about you?” he yelled.¹⁰⁹ Upon further questioning, he was flabbergasted to learn that Chapelle had no formal military training and didn’t understand she should be lying down to take her photographs. But Chapelle took this to be a learning moment. “He’d implanted the notion that maybe this war corresponding business involved more than just knowing how to make remarks which rang like a bell,” she wrote.¹¹⁰ As all reporters learn, the situation is different between the newsroom and the war zone. How one conducts him or herself must change, and new ways of interaction must be learned. This lack of formal military training becomes on the job training that can end in disastrous results if one is not careful.

Much of how Chapelle came to be a war correspondent was formed during World War II. She seems to credit her experiences in the Pacific as the most fortifying of her career, the years that allowed her to later go to Korea and then Vietnam to report. But most of her learning came from pushing the boundaries. In Okinawa, she went to the front lines and failed to return to her group at the correct time after struggling to find a story. After a few days of being with a Marine unit that in a way adopted her, she received word that there were arrest-on-sight orders for her. These had been downgraded

¹⁰⁹ Chapelle

¹¹⁰ Chapelle

from the original shoot-on-sight order.¹¹¹ She was finally arrested and ordered back to a plane to be taken out of the war zone, with an MP holding her at gunpoint the entire way.¹¹² Chapelle did not worry too much about getting in trouble with the military. She wanted the story, even if some of her rebellion was due to naiveté.

New Conflicts

Following World War II, Chapelle found it difficult to find work that inspired her. But eventually she and her husband travelled through Europe to photograph Italian orphans and then to the Middle East to photograph the drought in Azerbaijan, then a part of the Soviet Union. However, by 1956 the Chapelles' marriage had dissolved, and they divorced. Chapelle has been asked many times if a woman can be a war correspondent and a wife. After much thought, according to Chapelle, she came to the following conclusion:

I can't make the reason sound sentimental although I'm sure it has to do with the heart and not the head. But good correspondents are created out of the simple compulsion to go see for themselves what is happening. There's competition for their assignments, and the odds are heavily in favor of the man or woman who yields to the fewest distractions in obeying the compulsion. It's a twenty-four-hour a day task till a story's done and you cannot know as you start covering an event where it may lead you. Till it's done, people you love always receive less evidence of love than the correspondent wants to give them.

Sacrifice is in order when a woman wants to be a correspondent. The family may suffer more for these women who choose to be gone frequently for many weeks to capture a story. But the alternative seems to be to stay home and raise a family.

According to a 2011 report from the Working Mothers Institute, 51 percent of career-

¹¹¹ Chapelle

¹¹² Chapelle

oriented stay-at-home mothers would rather be working.¹¹³ For women who want to have a husband and family, the career almost becomes an after-thought. For women war correspondents such as Bourke-White and Chapelle, their marriages fell apart in favor of their careers. Balance is hard to find.

Following her divorce, Chapelle temporarily worked for the Research Institute of America, but with conflict brewing in the mass exodus of people from the Soviet Union into Austria, she was asked to photograph the incident for *Life*. Chapelle could not resist and flew overseas again. It was while in Hungary reporting on the trek refugees needed to make with two informants that Chapelle was captured by the Soviet Army and taken prisoner.¹¹⁴

Captivity saw different challenges for Chapelle. While being transferred during her first few hours of confinement, Chapelle had hidden her small camera by taping it to her upper arm. She worried about being searched and what would happen if the Soviets saw the pictures of the refugees and where they had been escaping into Austria on a daily basis. During a car ride, she used the ruse of throwing a cigarette out of a moving car's window to throw away the camera, which was hidden in her glove. "I was elated. Hadn't I just gotten rid of a most compromising bit of evidence right under the submachine gun barrel of the man who was supposed to keep me from doing anything like it?" she wrote.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ "The Working Mother Report," Working Mother Research Institute, 2011, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.wmmsurveys.com/WhatMomsChoose.pdf>>.

¹¹⁴ Chapelle

¹¹⁵ Chapelle

In addition, Chapelle admitted that knowing little, Magyar (the Hungarian language) or Russian, she did not understand the languages being spoken around her. It wasn't until a Russian officer addressed her in German that she was able to communicate. Finally, Chapelle was not used to the lack of information on where she would be going or what she would be doing. She found that the Soviet officers would lie to her often. The first time she found out about this was when she asked to be taken to the American Consul to straighten out her captivity. After spending the night in a holding cell, she was told they would be driving to the Consulate. Upon arriving at the final destination, Chapelle realized that they were further into Soviet territory and most likely in Budapest.¹¹⁶ She knew then that she was a captive and the Soviets would not be contacting the American Consul.

Her accommodations were that of a prison cell in the United States for the worst offenders - sparse and cold. "I had heard of this cell block; the refugees had described its architecture to me. I was not just in jail. I was in the F6 Street Prison, the most dreaded of them all," she wrote.¹¹⁷ Dinner consisted of cabbage in water or bread. Eventually, Chapelle realized how her captors used food as a weapon against the prisoners. She wrote:

Ten days on this diet, and I learned something about hunger I had never known. My own hunger was not just a weakness. It was a local pain as big as my hand, sharp or dull but never still. More important, under the impact of hunger, I watched myself become another person. I kept the ability to tell myself how I ought to act. But no matter what I planned to say or do or think, there was just one mood of which I was capable. Sullen and terrible ugliness. After a time, I thought I probably had forgotten how

¹¹⁶ Chapelle

¹¹⁷ Chapelle

to weep or curse. I knew I could not laugh. In short, my behavior was being effortlessly controlled by my jailors with food.¹¹⁸

Lack of good food and the same sparse environment combined with other forms of mental torture to affect the prisoners. There was no routine, as this was part of the daily torture as well, Chapelle wrote:

The daily routine in the F6 Street prison of a person Alone in solitary confinement, as I was followed a grim and erratic pattern. It was erratic for a purpose. You must never know how long it would be before the next food or rest. And you would know, almost from the first, that you were being systematically cut loose from time as a pillar of sanity.¹¹⁹

Chapelle was held in these conditions for over five weeks. The experience left her shaken, and she wrote of often feeling like she was being watched similar to the way she was watched in her jail cell.¹²⁰ However, Chapelle believed that it was her duty to be the reporter, to see something in that dangerous situation no matter the risks to her well-being. Her own words about her captivity foreshadow the risks she would take in Vietnam that would lead to her death:

My being here had begun because there was something I wanted to see. Well, how important was the job of being an eyewitness and a reporter? The answer to the question was simply yes. I believed the picture I'd been trying to make would have moved someone who saw it to provide new aid to the freedom fighters and there were no odds to be calculated in their favor. I balanced the certain, if incalculable, effect of that aid to them against the fifteen to one risk of one person, not young, without dependents. And I knew I didn't weigh that heavily in the scales.¹²¹

In January 1957, Chapelle was brought to trial in Hungary. She was particularly worried that morning as she felt she had been tricked by the Red government. Originally, Chapelle had received a summons with her charge of illegally entering the Hungarian

¹¹⁸ Chapelle

¹¹⁹ Chapelle

¹²⁰ Chapelle

¹²¹ Chapelle

border and date and room of her trial. She shared this with her attorney and the American consul. However, immediately upon returning to her cell, she was given another summons with the room and judge's name changed. She was not allowed to confer again with her attorney. In the end, the American consul was present, along with an AP reporter, Carl Hartmann. "My wonder at the AP's presence was growing. It proved that my trial was in fact a propaganda gimmick, a show trial. The Kadar government wanted these proceedings known in the West," she wrote.¹²² Following her trial, she was sentenced to the 50 days she had already served and expelled from Hungary forever, according to the ruling.

The year following her captivity, Chapelle was back overseas, this time with the Marines in 1958. On the way she had bet the Marines that she knew the place that they would be landing: Lebanon. With winning the bet, the Marines would set up a photo shoot with Chapelle giving the orders, something she was dismayed to win because of her position. "I agreed I'd won the bet, but I objected that I couldn't collect; the officers would never approve of a woman giving orders to a rifle squad. Sergeant Kenneth Mays turned out to be a positive thinker. 'You can do it. Women correspondents can get away with anything.' he said," wrote Chapelle. She learned much from the men, including how to carry her supplies for a long duration. "The only field gear I have now is the small U.S. combat pack. With a change of fatigues and socks, soap and towel, a can of C ration and my extra film, I can live and work up to three weeks with what I can carry on my back (the whole pack weighs less than 15 pounds)," she wrote.¹²³

¹²² Chapelle

¹²³ Chapelle

By this time in her career, women correspondents were no more a peculiarity in journalism, but the lengths to which they would go to get stories would still differ.

Chapelle seemed to still be the first to head into danger, no matter the cost to body or mind. She wrote of her personal internal battle in seeing violence on a frequent basis and how it saddened her regularly. "...In a world of order and plenty, it was so hard to tell of violence and want. Strangest of all in that moment, was the fact that to try to do this was my profession," she wrote. But since it was her profession, she would do it with nonstop vigor and find every opportunity to get the story, even if women were not supposed to be in that time or place.

Chapelle believed it was her mission to get the story, no matter the costs because this is what a correspondent does. She wrote of practicing jumps with the 101st Airborne Division and in doing so learning this lesson:

No matter what is happening to you, no matter what other people around you are doing, you're the one who later must be able to say you know what occurred because you were looking at it as it happened. Other people have other missions they can fight or halt or persuade or negotiate or barter or build or write symphonies. You may be free to do all those things or none, but what matters is that you keep your eyes open. If you call yourself a correspondent, your reason for being is first to see. And then, of course, to tell.¹²⁴

That was Chapelle's mission – to tell stories through words and photographs from World War II to Hungary and Lebanon to Cuba and then finally to Vietnam. An editor from William Morrow & Company wrote, "As a reporter she has accepted assignments that would give a brave man pause. She has done so not because she loves danger or

¹²⁴ Chapelle

violence, but because as a woman she has always sought the truth.”¹²⁵ This was the legacy she left. Unfortunately, she would be the first woman to leave too quickly.

Before travelling to Vietnam, Chapelle wrote her memoirs in a book entitled, What's A Woman Doing Here? While it received rave reviews in the *New York Times* and *Reader's Digest*, the publishers were not supportive because of her rather “unorthodox life-style” for a woman.¹²⁶ Sales did not go well, and only 7,100 copies were sold. But part of this could have been because of the atmosphere of the times. Published in 1961, the women's movement was not yet at its height. One could even say that it hadn't taken off yet. To say that women were running around the world taking pictures of war and being held captive was a new idea that few were willing to accept when they would not yet even admit on television that women and men often slept in the same bed. The conservatism of the times may have led to the hypocritical views of people reading her stories, but not really wanting to know that a woman had written or experienced them.

Chapelle would follow this book tour up with her final trip to Vietnam. Vietnam had become a special cause for Chapelle. She was outspoken on the United States' need to be in Southeast Asia. “Vietnam is the last piece of the free world's real estate on continental Asia...As long as I am a citizen of that free world and some members of it are doing my fighting for me, it would be ungallant of me not to at least recognize our common cause in speech,” she said.¹²⁷ Numerous newspapers and magazines including the *New York Times* and *Reader's Digest* were printing her pictures and articles of the

¹²⁵ Chapelle

¹²⁶ Ostroff 327.

¹²⁷ Ostroff 331.

war, especially in the beginning years of Vietnam when there was little interest about it in the United States. But in Vietnam, Chapelle was able to do something she was always best at in her career: becoming close to the military men around her. This was what she enjoyed – learning their stories, reporting their triumphs and failures. She reported on the 1962 funerals of the Sea Swallows military group that lost 30 members in an attack.¹²⁸ Chapelle had travelled with this group during one of her tours of Vietnam. Because of this, many believed she was losing her ability to impartially cover her stories and questioned how long it was taking her to cover stories. “She wasn’t that good, and she really had to hustle to keep the work coming. But she would stick with a story two or three months while another reporter would stay two days. And she would bring back the facts, no matter how long it would take,” said Bill Garrett, her editor at National Geographic. “Her rationalization was that she was so appalled by war that she felt she should show how horrible it is. That way she could help. But I don’t really think that was the truth. It wasn’t patriotism, either. She had this fascination for the military.”¹²⁹

On Oct. 11, 1965, Chapelle would start her fifth trip to Vietnam to cover the war. She joined with a marine outfit, First Platoon of F Company of the Second Battalion of the Third Marine Regiment on two missions.¹³⁰ The first mission, Red Snapper, brought her to the first combat patrol that she had seen in Vietnam, but ultimately was not a very successful mission. It was on the second mission, Black Ferret, that Chapelle herself would make headlines. On Nov. 4, 1965, Dickey Chapelle was killed when she walking with the platoon. Someone stepped on a “nylon fish wire attached to an M-26

¹²⁸ Ostroff 337.

¹²⁹ Ostroff 377.

¹³⁰ Ostroff 385.

hand grenade underneath an 81-mm mortar round.”¹³¹ Fragments of the grenade and additional shrapnel had slit open her throat. Father John McNamara bent down to give her last rights where she lay dying, a scene caught in the photo lens of Associated Press photographer Henri Huet.¹³² Chapelle had gone from capturing the story, to being a story that would live on over 50 years after her death.

She was the first woman war correspondent killed in action. However, her legacy continued in inspiring other groups to continue to stand up for the less fortunate. In the days after her death, the University of Wisconsin’s Committee to Support the People of South Vietnam collected care packages for distribution in Vietnam.¹³³ But perhaps more notable was the paratroopers of the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division’s tribute to her. Chapelle was long known for having a relationship with the military around her, it was how she was able to capture so many of her stories.

Following her death, the paratroopers named their drop zone in the Dominican Republic “Dickey Chapelle” in honor of her.¹³⁴ It is not hard to believe that she would have been honored, and perhaps a little embarrassed by this tribute as she considered her work and the camaraderie that she found through it to be a vital part of her life. After all, she once commented on her death when it may come. “When my time comes, I want it to be on a patrol with the marines,” she said.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Ostroff 24.

¹³² Ostroff 24.

¹³³ Ostroff 389.

¹³⁴ Ostroff 389.

¹³⁵ Ostroff 389.

VIRGINIA IRWIN

Another woman war correspondent to make headlines from the battlefields of World War II was Virginia Irwin. A reporter from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, she made history as being one of two reporters in Berlin the day it fell to the Allied Forces in 1945. Irwin sought the story, even pushing the boundaries when she was told no by both editors and the military.

Born in Quincy, IL, Irwin first joined the *Post-Dispatch* in 1932. The paper was owned by Joseph Pulitzer II who believed in strong and comprehensive newspaper coverage of world events. She worked as a clerk in the clippings room, known as the morgue.¹³⁶ Along the way, she began writing features for the paper on a variety of topics ranging from “marriage and divorce (both of which she had tried) to opera, theater, national political conventions, and Hollywood.”¹³⁷ When the United States became involved in the war in 1941, she began writing on women’s role at home in the war effort, travelling the country to interview those in the Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps. However, Irwin wanted to report on the efforts overseas and requested that the *Post-Dispatch* editors send her to Europe. They disagreed stating that they “...relied for war news on wire and syndicated news services. They had no plans to



Virginia Irwin
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

¹³⁶ Tim O'Neil, "A Look Back P-D Reporter Who Reached Berlin Blocked by Army Censors," STLtoday.com, Lee Enterprises, 8 May 2011, 18 Apr. 2012 <http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/a-look-back-p-d-reporter-who-reached-berlin-blocked/article_d212c70a-c96f-506c-b8cb-b862fb695b56.html>.

¹³⁷ Nancy Caldwell Sorel, *The Women Who Wrote the War* (New York: Arcade, 1999) 212.

maintain any war correspondent, certainly not a woman.”¹³⁸ But this would not stop the headstrong Irwin.

Breaking the Rules

In 1943, Irwin requested a leave of absence from the *Post-Dispatch* so she could join the American Red Cross in Europe, mainly in Britain. For Irwin, this was a way to get to Europe first and second, begin writing while helping the war efforts. She began to send her stories back to the *Post-Dispatch*, which would print them on a regular basis.¹³⁹ This idea benefited her when in 1944 the paper had decided to send a correspondent to Europe, but found much of the process slowed through the military. Accreditation and a security clearance could take more than six weeks. It was difficult to get onto mainland Europe.¹⁴⁰ Eventually, the paper was granted two accreditations, one of which was for Irwin.

During the war, the U.S. military set up the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) in Britain as a headquarters to its operations. SHAEF set up many rules for women correspondent:

Women reporters were not to visit the press camps, were not to go farther front than the nurses, were not to leave a hospital or Wac [sic] area without permission from the CO [Commanding Officer]. Jeeps and drivers were not offered to them. While the men's stories were censored on the spot, the women's would go by ordinary field-message service back to London, by which time...they often made no sense, because there was no chance for the writer to bridge over what had been censored out.^{141*}

¹³⁸ Sorel 212.

¹³⁹ Sorel 212.

¹⁴⁰ Sorel 212.

¹⁴¹ Sorel 242.

* It was often difficult for correspondents to negotiate with military officials on copy that the military deemed inappropriate.

These restrictions compared to those applied for men, made it more difficult for the women to turn in breaking news stories or get the scoop on their competitors. In addition, because they were travelling as women associated with the military, they were expected to look like and travel with equipment similar to the Women's Army Auxiliary Corp (WAAC) women. The women correspondents "dressed in Wac garb of woolen underwear, olive drab pants with waterproof canvas leggings, sweater, field jacket boots. They carried the regulation gas mask, helmet, folding spade, two musette bags, and portable typewriter."¹⁴² In the field, two or three women correspondents would group together with a military contingent or hospital. The women would share a tent, each receiving a bedroll to sleep on. Latrines would be built nearby, and the women would carry water in their steel pot which also doubled as a helmet, learning to take a bath from this amount of water.¹⁴³ The women, while thought of as delicate by military officials, still were able to make accommodations outdoors if it meant being on hand for the chance of a story.

While the company of the women correspondents was not bad, most would have preferred to be either on their own or with males. It is not hard to believe as they were all vying for the same stories and to scoop each other. Irwin herself was "unabashed in her preference for the company of men over that of women, which she felt she'd had enough of in the apple orchards of Normandy and the press hotel in Brittany."¹⁴⁴ Eventually, Irwin would even connect with the command post of the Nineteenth Tactical Air

¹⁴² Sorel 243.

¹⁴³ Sorel 244.

¹⁴⁴ Sorel 273.

Command of the Ninth Air Force under the command of General Otto P. Weyland.¹⁴⁵

Her short visit with the command was supposed to be for three days. On her own she extended it for three months. SHAEF officials sent orders that she report to them immediately, even issuing an all-points bulletin for her return, but she evaded them. Even the *Post-Dispatch* editors often did not know her location, but her editors were happy to print her stories since she was the only reporter they had on mainland Europe. The newspaper's second correspondent was held up in England.

By late summer 1944, Paris had been declared safe, and women correspondents investigated the city looking for stories.¹⁴⁶ Irwin and another reporter asked a jeep driver to take them through the Parisian suburbs first in hopes of finding another correspondent who had not been heard from in many weeks. Along the way, there was an attack and German soldiers lay dead on the side of the road. The driver of the jeep sped to a nearby village, and upon entering they were celebrated as the first Americans to arrive, "They were exuberantly kissed and hugged and cried over, their jeep heaped with flowers, tomatoes, peaches and cognac. The driver's face was plastered with lipstick and Virginia declared she had kissed the whole village. When at last they reached Paris, it was almost anticlimactic," author Sorel writes.¹⁴⁷ The village was told they were finally liberated – and by two female war correspondents and their driver.

A Reporter in Berlin

In April 1945, the war was coming to a close, but war correspondents of either gender were forbidden in Berlin by the military. Irwin joined up with Andrew Tully of

¹⁴⁵ Sorel 273.

¹⁴⁶ Sorel 261.

¹⁴⁷ Sorel 262.

the *Boston Traveler* and an Army jeep driver, Sgt. Johnny Wilson.¹⁴⁸ The trio began their way through Germany, first stopping in a small city near the Elbe River with other correspondents. There, the correspondents dined and danced with Russian soldiers.¹⁴⁹ Tully suggested going north to Berlin, and Irwin agreed. Their driver began the 80-mile journey. They arrived in Berlin on April 27, 1945 to find the city in shambles and under the Russian control.¹⁵⁰ Dead lay on the sidewalks.

“The air sinks of cordite and the dead. All Berlin seems confusion,” Irwin wrote.¹⁵¹ The Russians had annihilated the city. “In this German capital lies their revenge for Leningrad and Stalingrad, for Sevastopol and Moscow,” wrote Irwin. While initially suspicious of the trio, the Russians quickly asked them to join in the celebration, inviting them to dance, eat and drink vodka with them.

“It was the most exciting experience that could happen to a reporter,” she said of the experience. “It is all unreal. Russian officers in their work tunics bedecked with the medals of Leningrad, Stalingrad, and all the other great Russian battles, are unreal. The whole battle is somehow unreal,” she said.¹⁵² Knowing that she was one of the only reporters capturing this epic moment at the close of a disastrous war thrilled Irwin. She tried to capture each detail for her readers in such a way that they could try to picture the surreal nature of this event.

When the group returned to American lines to file their stories, the American censors were furious that they had gone into Berlin without permission. At that time,

¹⁴⁸ O’Neil

¹⁴⁹ Sorel 365.

¹⁵⁰ O’Neil

¹⁵¹ Sorel 368.

¹⁵² Sorel 367.

stories had to be turned in to the military to transmit from the battle zones. Both Irwin and Tully lost their accreditation immediately and were forced to wait to file their stories until SHAEF allowed them to do so, which would be a few weeks for some content and months for more.¹⁵³ Senior Army officials continued to hold a grudge for two years and failed to invite Irwin to the correspondents' dinner in Washington, D.C., in 1946. By 1947, the military "restored her credentials and praised her 'outstanding and conspicuous service.'"¹⁵⁴ The *Post-Dispatch* editors, however, were very impressed. Joseph Pulitzer II gave her an extra year's pay as a bonus for her work during the war.

Irwin did write several stories about the people affected by the war. As cities and sections of Europe were liberated, she would interview the soldiers from prisoner-of-war camps. She was passionate about their stories and horrified at the physical and mental conditions they were in. She wrote of the "haggard and half-starved Allied prisoners of war, ghost-like remnants of an 'army' of 30,000 men condemned by the Germans to a two-month, 500-mile starvation march across Germany."¹⁵⁵ Irwin also wrote of the "abortion camps" in the Neideraula Staasforst. Here, pregnant Russian and Polish women, who under Nazi rules were not permitted to have children, were induced into labor where the baby always died and more than half of the mothers did as well.¹⁵⁶ The horrific nature of this camp was difficult for Irwin to write about. In fact, some ways of inducement of labor she deemed "too barbaric for print."¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Sorel 368.

¹⁵⁴ O'Neil

¹⁵⁵ Sorel 337.

¹⁵⁶ Sorel 353-354.

¹⁵⁷ Sorel 354.

Following the war, Irwin came home to St. Louis where she was named a “woman of the year” for “distinguished war coverage” by the Organization of Business Professional Women.¹⁵⁸ Like many war correspondents, she found it difficult to acclimate back to life in the city. She was given other top priority stories for the paper, but “a series on reentry problems experienced by men and women of the military was closer to her heart.”¹⁵⁹ Unlike Bourke-White and Chapelle, she would not start exploring the other conflicts of the world. Instead, she focused on feature articles she could write from New York, never actually making it into the *Post-Dispatch* newsroom. She retired from the paper in 1963 and died in 1980 in Mount Vernon, MO, at the age of 72.¹⁶⁰

LESLIE COCKBURN

Even though journalism frontiers were broken by both Margaret Bourke-White and Dickey Chapelle, other frontiers still existed. Leslie Cockburn would cover “six wars and a revolution, as a producer for CBS and ABC News, correspondent for *PBS Frontline*, and a writer for *Vanity Fair*.”¹⁶¹ As the first female foreign news correspondent for a major network in the growing age of broadcast reporting, Cockburn led a new trial for women in producing the news segments and telling men what to do next.



Leslie Cockburn

¹⁵⁸ Sorel 387.

¹⁵⁹ Sorel 396.

¹⁶⁰ O'Neil

¹⁶¹ Leslie Cockburn, *Looking for Trouble: One Woman, Six Wars and a Revolution* (New York: Anchor, 1998) 2.

Formative Years

Cockburn was born in San Francisco on Sept. 2, 1952. Her father ran a shipping corporation. As a child, she had no dreams to be a journalist. It was not until she was in her late teens that she realized she was on her way to becoming one. “I started down this road as a traveler with a taste for danger,” she wrote. “People become journalists because they cannot decide what to be when they grow up.”¹⁶² During her freshman year at Yale University in 1971, Cockburn decided to take time off and travel, arriving in Africa. Yale had only been admitting women since 1969.¹⁶³ Cockburn wrote that at mixers she and the other women would pretend that they had been brought in from other campuses or the men would stop dancing with her. “Yale women were too threatening, too dangerous, too smart. The admission that I lived across the street inevitably left me without a dance partner,” she wrote.¹⁶⁴ She had done this to help her prepare to be an anthropologist.

At this time she wanted to study the woman’s role of the Akamba tribe in Kenya. She had no formal invitation to be here, but wrote that this is how she learned the first rule of journalism, “barge through the door even though you have no business being there.”¹⁶⁵ It was here that she had her first interview with a village elder who had been a witness to the 1903 British colonization of Africa and could describe firsthand what had happened. Cockburn called it her “first memorable interview.”¹⁶⁶ But most notably,

¹⁶² Cockburn 16.

¹⁶³ “Landmarks in Yale’s History,” Yale University, Apr. 2012
<<http://www.yale.edu/timeline/1969/index.html>>.

¹⁶⁴ Cockburn 26.

¹⁶⁵ Cockburn 17.

¹⁶⁶ Cockburn 22.

Cockburn used this time to learn to observe and identify with others, skills that would suit her well in her career as a journalist.

“Tight Fraternity”

Following graduation at Yale, Cockburn moved to London for graduate school at the University of London’s School of Oriental and African Studies when a friend convinced her to apply for a job at NBC News. In 1976, she interviewed with Irv Margolis, bureau chief in London. He was impressed with her background at Yale and her ability to speak Swahili, but did not offer her a job that day. The following morning, he called asking her to write a paper on global censorship for his lecture in Turkey the next week.¹⁶⁷ When she successfully completed this project, she was put on the payroll at 100 pounds a week plus 50 pounds for each radio spot.¹⁶⁸ Her job was to look for stories anywhere in the world and develop them for *Nightly News* in New York. She would float around to various departments as needed, but always stood out amongst her colleagues. “The peculiar thing about my presence in that bureau was that every one of my American colleagues, whether in radio or television, producer, editor, correspondent, camera operator or engineer, was a man. There was the occasional comely English secretary and bureau assistant. But this was veneer. I had landed in a tight fraternity,” she wrote.¹⁶⁹

Because of this, combat reporting was still a privilege restricted to men. The notion of a woman travelling to report was still an oddity even though for decades women had been doing so. “All of the questions about women that seemed to vex

¹⁶⁷ Cockburn 27.

¹⁶⁸ Cockburn 28.

¹⁶⁹ Cockburn 28.

military commanders and bureau chiefs – ‘Where will they sleep, change clothes, pee? Can they stand the noise?’ – should have been long since resolved....I fought long and hard for the privilege of being shot at,” she wrote.¹⁷⁰ Her first overseas assignment though would not have anything to do with a conflict. She travelled to Liberia to report on London’s oil issues and oil spill in the Channel.¹⁷¹ Even still, she relished the chance to travel and report.

She was given more responsibility, but it cost her some camaraderie in the newsroom. In January 1977, Margolis allowed her to set up a way to smuggle footage of the repression in Czechoslovakia known as Charter 77.¹⁷² “Charter 77 indicts the government for violations of human rights provisions in the nation's 1960 Constitution and in various treaties and covenants of which Czechoslovakia is a signatory,” according to the documents.¹⁷³ It was highly dangerous for these to be smuggled out and Cockburn relied heavily on sources in the country to help her in the transfer of the footage. The men working with Cockburn could not believe that a woman could be “resourceful and discreet” and often asked if she was CIA.¹⁷⁴

During the spring of 1977, Cockburn married Andrew Cockburn, an Irish journalist in his own right who specialized in arms trades and American politics.¹⁷⁵ To have a husband who understood her needs to be out in the field helped their marriage. “Marriage gave me a partner in crime, someone who understood the shorthand and inside

¹⁷⁰ Cockburn 29.

¹⁷¹ Cockburn 30.

¹⁷² Cockburn 31.

¹⁷³ "Appendix D: Manifesto of Charter 77 – Czechoslovakia," Library of Congress, 18 Apr. 2012 <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/czechoslovakia/cs_appnd.html>.

¹⁷⁴ Cockburn 31.

¹⁷⁵ Cockburn 41.

workings of journalism. We both traveled. We spent roughly 70 percent of our first year of marriage apart on the road. We enthused about each other's stories. Our phone bills were equal to the gross national product of a small country," she wrote.¹⁷⁶

In December 1977, following a holiday with the family, Margolis sent her to Libya to interview Colonel Muammar Qaddafi, who was known to harbor terrorists in his dealings in the oil industry.¹⁷⁷ Upon arriving she met with Qaddafi's cousin, Said, in hopes of being the first foreign correspondent to interview him. She drank all afternoon with Said convincing him to help her and he finally agreed. The interview was set up for the following morning at nine a.m. However, Cockburn slept through it, an insult to Qaddafi. An envoy was sent to her hotel room and after yelling at her for some time, the interview was rescheduled for midnight.¹⁷⁸ She had no need to be worried about how Qaddafi would act once the interview started as he was more questioning about how he looked on camera and the state of affairs in England. The interview turned out to be a small segment on the news, but had positioned Cockburn to be known among heads of states.

In the spring of 1978, NBC News went through some restructuring that left Cockburn looking for a new job. By chance she heard about and was then offered a position with *60 Minutes* at CBS News.¹⁷⁹ This allowed her to produce 10- to 15-minute documentaries on a variety of subjects. She began travelling around the world as stories were being developed. She continued to travel for work even at the end of 1978 when

¹⁷⁶ Cockburn 46.

¹⁷⁷ Cockburn 34.

¹⁷⁸ Cockburn 38.

¹⁷⁹ Cockburn 46.

she discovered she was pregnant and needed to be report to Singapore for a story. Both Morley Safer and John Tiffin of *60 Minutes* expected her to quit, but she continued to work and began planning for a trip to Monrovia, Liberia. Another producer, Bill McClure, yelled at them, “How can you allow a woman seven months pregnant to go to Africa?”¹⁸⁰ But Tiffin allowed Cockburn to make the decision. She decided to go. After writing about the extent of the upper class’ fascination with black magic, she returned back to London to give birth to her daughter, Chloe. However, three days following the birth, she was in the office making calls on her next story and three weeks later was in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, investigating a family that had caught the attention of Interpol, MI5 and the FBI.¹⁸¹ She had a need to prove that motherhood would not keep her from fulfilling her work duties and did all she could to not be replaced:

There was a myth pervasive in the seventies that women could never be as “reliable” as their professional male colleagues because of childbirth. How could you depend on them? The myth kept women in the barrios, the research pools, the secretarial jobs, and was never far from the surface in contract negotiations. I was determined to bread the mold. If I did not, the options were stark: quit, go without children, forget about promotion. There were many childless women “married to the network.” This seemed perverse. Male colleagues doted on their children. So would I. This was not my last pregnancy.¹⁸²

This last statement was true, as in 1984 she was pregnant with her daughter Olivia. In 1992 she traveled to Somalia while pregnant with her son.¹⁸³ Cockburn placed a lot of responsibility for family duties with her husband, something he was happy to do as he believed her work was just as important.

¹⁸⁰ Cockburn 54.

¹⁸¹ Cockburn 57-58.

¹⁸² Cockburn 58.

¹⁸³ Cockburn 199.

Blacklisted

As her career took off, Cockburn would begin making enemies and the subsequent fall out would drive her career path. In 1983, Cockburn produced a segment called “The Pentagon Underground” that depicted the test results for “big ticket” weapons systems and had access to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger.¹⁸⁴ When President Ronald Reagan saw the footage on the air, he was so outraged that he called Weinberger immediately to chastise him for allowing Cockburn such access to the documents and the Pentagon. Cockburn herself was then blacklisted from the Pentagon and other agencies. But this did not stop her. If anything it made her push harder and prepared her for her first war in Central America.

Cockburn travelled to Nicaragua in 1985 to cover the rebels known in the United States as “contras, thousands of Nicaraguans and Miami Cubans on the U.S. payroll,” that had been accused of terrorizing citizens and causing harm to those who attempted to help anyone in the countryside.¹⁸⁵ The Contras were armed by the U.S. government to help oust the current Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Cockburn had a mission of her own with this story, “I wanted to establish at what level the tactics were sanctioned by Washington, whether the contras’ CIA minders encouraged them or turned a blind eye. I was determined to make the backbreaking journeys to find the witnesses and victims of the attacks and question them directly, with a camera.”¹⁸⁶

When Cockburn, her on-air reporter, Jane Wallace, and a local named Cookie, were denied access to Rio Blanco, a place where the guerrilla war was raging, Cockburn

¹⁸⁴ Cockburn 76.

¹⁸⁵ Cockburn 80.

¹⁸⁶ Cockburn 80.

altered her stamped documents for another city as best she could and declared that the three of them would leave the next morning. Though the journey was nerve-racking and tumultuous, they arrived to Rio Blanco unharmed. There, through a priest, Father Feltz, they were able to interview the survivors of the Contra's nights of terror on the community.¹⁸⁷ Many children were orphaned and more were left with wounds of their own. When the group interviewed a civilian director of the Contra forces who defected, the State Department grew upset. "They are not military tactics. They're tactics of using terror for the purpose of making people respect or follow you. The policy gives a green light to defeat the enemy by any means," said Edgar Chamorro of the U.S. government's policy for the Contras. "...The White House knows very well what's going on."¹⁸⁸ When the segment aired in 1985, Wallace and Cockburn were blacklisted by the State Department. Reagan administration officials called for them to be fired. By 1986, the attorney general would announce that the Contras were an issue for the White House.

In the spring of 1987, Cockburn received a call from David Fanning, executive producer of *PBS Frontline* asking her to join their program where she could produce hour-long documentaries and appear as an on-air correspondent.¹⁸⁹ She agreed right away. An added bonus was that her husband, Andrew, could join as a co-producer. The added benefit also brought an additional worry for their two children. Her 8-year old daughter would ask, "What happens if you both get killed?"¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Cockburn 84-85.

¹⁸⁸ Cockburn 87.

¹⁸⁹ Cockburn 108.

¹⁹⁰ Cockburn 110.

Cockburn found it wasn't a question she could readily answer even if everything was in order. And it seemed still even after all of the work Cockburn had put in people still asked if she was worried leaving her family, a question that was never asked of her husband.¹⁹¹ This would be a new trial for the family, one that would be tested when both Cockburns ventured to Colombia to report on the drug wars of the Cali and Medellin cartels. The situation was tense, and a wrong move could cause death. In fact, during this story, they had drawn the ire of the local drug production chief who gave them 24 hours to leave the country. He said he would kill their local guide as well. The Cockburns did not immediately leave, though. Cockburn wrote a letter to the drug dealer asking that they be spared, apologizing for any slight and asking that their guide not be killed as well. She informed him about their project and sent a few tapes of their other documentary films. Then they waited. "Our fear of death was replaced with fear of failure, which seemed marginally worse. Our mood was black," she wrote.¹⁹² That evening the production chief rescinded his death threats and asked them to join him on their next trip to the Cali area. Then eventually did and were present for the party the Cali cartel held after successfully defeating rival cartels.

By 1989, Cockburn was at ABC News working on a story with Peter Jennings on the accusation that the United States was supporting the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Cockburn would research and shoot the majority of the piece in six weeks, while Jennings would only have one week in the country for interviews due to his duties at *World News*.¹⁹³ To reach Cambodia, Cockburn flew first through Bangkok and then

¹⁹¹ Cockburn 110.

¹⁹² Cockburn 120.

¹⁹³ Cockburn 127.

started her travels from there. She had difficulties in that the Cambodian minister of defense, General Teh Banh, would not allow any reporters into western Cambodia because of the Khmer Rouge guerrilla attacks. Once she asked him to join in her travels, he agreed to allow her access.¹⁹⁴ They drove through a small battle where rockets began falling. To Cockburn, this was a war with no way to protect oneself. She described the scene as rockets fell around them:

They whistled all around us. The whistle is the most terrifying sound I have ever heard, as though the sky is ripping. The rockets were coming in fast from multiple launchers. There were dugout shelters everywhere in the village but they were of little use. A rocket will plow right through it. You are as safe lighting a cigarette in the middle of the road as you are cowering in a trench. The noise is everywhere. There is no front and no rear with the rockets raining down. You cannot see the rocket itself until it explodes.¹⁹⁵

During the assault, Cockburn injured her leg by slashing it open on the metal of the flatbed truck they were riding in. When Jennings arrived, already somewhat discouraged about completing the story, he inspected it and wasn't pleased. Jennings also handed her a care package from her husband that included pictures of their daughters. Once again, a woman reporter was racked with guilt about time away from her family conflicting with her desire to commit to her career and the duties she felt to the people who watched her stories:

I had been away from home for nearly four weeks. I had to remind myself that taking on the monstrous Khmer Rouge and the covert operators who were their lifeline was worth the separation. The Khmer Rouge control of border camps, their seat at the United Nations, their acceptance by Washington, were shocking. Of any story I had ever tackled, this was the most appalling justice.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Cockburn 133.

¹⁹⁵ Cockburn 136.

¹⁹⁶ Cockburn 137.

Even Jennings brought this up in a rather rude statement. “So, you have to read about your children in a magazine,” he said.¹⁹⁷ As Cockburn stated earlier, men seemed to not have as many problems choosing between family life and career as women do. And when a woman chooses one or the other, she feels great anxiety about it. As for Cockburn, she wanted to continue seeking out the truth about the American government and the Khmer Rouge. She wanted both a career and a family, even if some sacrifice was needed occasionally. In April 1990, the piece about the Khmer Rouge aired, causing Congress to open an investigation into how funding was being spent. The White House stopped their funding of the Khmer Rouge shortly afterwards.

Persian Gulf

A few short months later, Cockburn was witness to the beginning of the Persian Gulf War. As she was beginning research on a news segment from Saudi Arabia, Cockburn’s status as a woman was questioned once again, specifically in the restaurants and coffee shops that had special sections for women and children. She wrote of her struggles to get around this ruling:

I negotiated with the headwaiter to confer on me the status of “honorary man,” a precedent set by Queen Elizabeth, so I could openly sit in the restaurant. Still, I had to keep watch for the government’s religious storm troopers. They were particularly fond of hounding women out of cars and beating them if they dared climb behind the wheel.¹⁹⁸

Nonetheless, Cockburn was soon out among the soldiers, embedded in the 4th Battalion of the 82nd Airborne. She reported on the men who were ready to fight for American needs back home if it came to that, but more about the technical problems their

¹⁹⁷ Cockburn 137.

¹⁹⁸ Cockburn 147.

machinery was having in the 90-plus degree heat each day. She was instructed on what to do if the battalion came under attacks of nerve or mustard gas, the deadly chemical warfare that was expected. It would seem no place for a war correspondent, let alone a woman, but Cockburn learned about the antidotes issued to her. She kept up with the men since she was there on her own job – to tell the stories. However, she did leave just prior to the first night of the war to report back in the U.S.

The second night of the war, she was in a bar in Washington D.C. when she learned of an Iraqi Scud attack on Tel Aviv. She called her executive producer, Tom Yellin, and asked to leave the next morning. He agreed. Elements of the U. S. Army arrived the same night as she to defend Tel Aviv with Patriot missiles. Cockburn reported from the Hilton Hotel, arriving an hour before another attack was suspected to hit.¹⁹⁹ A room had been set up in the back of the hotel for the media, blacked out to prevent locating the hotel by the enemy and for protection from bombs, but Cockburn was dismayed at the lack of view of the missiles. She journeyed to the 14th floor of the hotel and set up cameras on a balcony.

During one of the nights of Scud bombing, Cockburn and her team were on the balcony, when they realized that the Patriot missiles were misfiring and not actually shooting down the Scud attacks. In fact, they were causing additional destruction to the city. She called the ABC foreign desk and had them announce it on-air that afternoon. That same evening, the press corps received a routine briefing that said the Patriot missiles were successful in shooting down the Scuds. Cockburn noticed that none of the press present questioned it. They had all been in the blackened room and had not seen it.

¹⁹⁹ Cockburn 157.

When she brought it to the attention of those in the room, the Israeli press coordinator admitted that Patriot Missiles had failed.²⁰⁰ Had Cockburn not risked her life to get the story, she would not have been able to shed the light on the truth, and the press in that room would have blindly reported what was told to them without questioning it.

Cockburn, along with her husband, was the first journalist to interview Saddam Hussein's two sons, Uday and Qusay, in 1992. After a long journey, they met the two brothers in a small restaurant in Baghdad by chance. All Iraqi nationals had been ordered to leave. Andrew was concerned as rumors had spread that the last time Uday had "fancied a woman in a restaurant, he shot her army officer husband on the spot," Cockburn wrote.²⁰¹ But Cockburn saw this as a fortuitous circumstance that she should take advantage of immediately. But as she and her husband talked to the brothers and their entourage about everything from American politics to Las Vegas, Cockburn realized that the situation was more dire than she first thought as they began separating her from her husband and talking only to her. She recognized they needed to get out as soon as possible. After leaving the country and writing the story of their dinner with the two brothers, the Cockburns learned that they were blacklisted once again. It was suggested that they more than likely could get a visa to get into the country again, but would never make it out alive.²⁰² Uday was incredibly upset about the article when he read the papers smuggled into the country.

Leslie Cockburn and her husband Andrew continued writing for various news agencies for many years, even eventually co-producing a movie, *The Peacemaker* in

²⁰⁰ Cockburn 159.

²⁰¹ Cockburn 187.

²⁰² Cockburn 198.

1997, starring George Clooney and Nicole Kidman. In 2008, she co-produced *American Casino*, a documentary on the financial collapse of Wall Street.²⁰³ She had been a correspondent for over 40 years, but had also been a wife and mother. She famously pushed through the barrier to become the first in many of those agencies, especially at a time when a woman wasn't always welcome. But through dedication and hard work, she was able to get the stories, often well before a man could even get on the ground.

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR

Women pioneering in the field have had to work hard to succeed in being a foreign correspondent, particularly in the early years of female correspondents. But even with several women who have paved the way, the work is not completed. Modern-day women must still work hard to prove that they are just as capable of covering the news from far-off places of the world during conflicts, while often maintaining families back home. Christiane Amanpour is one of these women and has a storied career to date as evidence.

Journalism School

Christiane Amanpour was born in London on Jan. 12, 1958.²⁰⁴ Her father, Muhammod, was a Persian airline executive. He and his British wife, Patricia, moved the family to Tehran, Iran, shortly



Christiane Amanpour
Getty Images

²⁰³ "American Casino - Presented by Table Rock Films, Produced by Leslie and Andrew Cockburn," Table Rock Productions, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.americancasinothemovie.com/the-director>>.

²⁰⁴ Deborah White, "Profile of Christiane Amanpour, ABC 'This Week' Moderator," US Liberal Politics. About.com, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://usliberals.about.com/od/thePressandJournalist1/p/Amanpour.htm>>.

following Amanpour's birth. She attended boarding schools in London as a child, but spent time in Iran as well. During the 1979 revolution, the family fled to London.²⁰⁵ While in the city, Amanpour's younger sister enrolled in a small journalism college but dropped out after deciding that the curriculum didn't interest her. Appalled at her family losing the tuition, Amanpour took her spot.²⁰⁶ It was shortly following this move that Amanpour decided to attend college at the University of Rhode Island and major in journalism. "When I first decided that I wanted to be a war correspondent, I didn't have specific role models in view. My experience was a personal one. I had gone through my own war in Iran, the Iranian revolution, and my career, I think, was born out of seeing world-changing, life-changing events at first hand," she wrote.²⁰⁷

Compared with the women mentioned before, Amanpour is the first to major in journalism. This could indicate a certain change in the marketability of the profession to young students. During the last part of the 20th century, it seems as if the "apprenticeship" style of working at a business or firm has largely disappeared, replaced by a need for a more specific journalism education. Journalism schools and programs have been added across the country. A recent search of *U.S. News and World Reports* which rates top universities ranked 161 schools that excelled in journalism and related majors.²⁰⁸ As more and more students graduate from these schools, the way of pushing boundaries will change, and women now seek enrollment in these schools more than men. For example, the University of Kansas' William Allen White School of

²⁰⁵ White

²⁰⁶ Marlo Thomas, ed. *The Right Words at the Right Time* (New York: Atria, 2002) 5.

²⁰⁷ Michelle Ferrari and James Tobin, comps., *Reporting America at War: An Oral History* (New York: Hyperion, 2003) 208.

²⁰⁸ Author compiled data.

Journalism's enrollment in 2009 was more than 70 percent women.²⁰⁹ The profession is no longer the old boys club. Women are making many of the decisions as editors.

CNN

During school, Amanpour interned as a graphic designer for WJAR-TV in Providence, RI. "The job was fascinating, because it put me in the control room, the nerve center of a TV news program," she wrote.²¹⁰ In 1983, she joined CNN as an assistant at the international desk in Atlanta. "I arrived at CNN with a suitcase, with my bicycle and with about 100 dollars," she wrote.²¹¹ She had only been offered this job after being turned down at several others for lacking "the right look" because of her Middle Eastern ancestry.²¹² "...More than once I was told that my British accent and unconventional looks were liabilities. There was no way I'd be accepted by Middle America TV viewers, I was informed. My long and foreign-sounding name was also considered an impediment," she wrote of being turned down for many on-camera positions.²¹³

After Amanpour worked on the international desk for several years, in 1989 executives promoted her to CNN foreign correspondent. That position allowed her to report on democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe, most notably, the Romanian

²⁰⁹ Brian Frederick, "Women Dominate J-school Enrollment," LJWorld.com, 18 Aug. 2009, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2009/aug/18/women-dominate-j-school-enrollment/>>.

²¹⁰ Thomas 5.

²¹¹ White

²¹² White

²¹³ Thomas 5.

revolution that year.²¹⁴ “I was determined to press on...I kept falling into dead men’s shoes, winding my way up through vacancies,” she spoke of the time before her promotion.²¹⁵ But it was in 1990 that she started to become better known to viewers of the network. “I became a foreign correspondent in 1990. Those were heady times. The Berlin Wall had fallen, communism was collapsing, the West had won the Cold War,” she once wrote. She was asked to cover the growing issues in the Persian Gulf. CNN allowed her to choose to cover this war:

[In the Persian Gulf War] one thing CNN did was very courageous – and this was [due to] Ted Turner, who is really the last true, courageous, independent news publisher. At a time when all the other major news organizations, particularly the newspapers, decided amongst themselves that they wouldn’t be in Baghdad, he said to us, “That’s our job. We will be there.” But he made it clear that it was voluntary. Whoever wanted to, could, and whoever didn’t, didn’t.²¹⁶

Amanpour believes that CNN being part of this coverage during the initial bombing of Baghdad catapulted the network into being on the forefront of how to cover a war:

For the first time, we were behind so-called enemy lines, and we were able to transmit what was going on...Since then, we and others have tried to repeat that, so that every war now becomes a night-scope, grainy coverage kind of war – people trying to get the bombs as they fall – dramatic, first-person sort of reportage.²¹⁷

Amanpour herself was not one of the initial three reporters CNN had in Baghdad during that first evening. She was assigned to a press pool – something she seemed to care little for, but made the best of under the circumstances. However, what she detested

²¹⁴ Eric Schmitt, "Five Years Later, the Gulf War Story Is Still Being Told," CPCW: The Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing, 12 May 1996, 18 Apr. 2012
<<http://writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/Coursetexts/gulf-war-arnett.html>>.

²¹⁵ Thomas 6.

²¹⁶ Ferrari 209.

²¹⁷ Ferrari 209.

the most was the military's view of censorship on her articles and segments. When she was assigned to an aircraft carrier in the Red Sea, her team had arrived before the start of the war. While waiting to be dispatched with the carrier to the fighting, she wanted to start interviewing the men. However, the military had ordered that she ask nothing specific about the upcoming engagement, so Amanpour and her colleagues focused on the people, but even that was censored by the military:

One of my colleagues had been in a recreation room with the fighter pilots when they came back, and he had written in his copy that they were laughing, chatting, talking, reading between air strikes, and that some of them were reading girly magazines. This is not an issue of national security. They censored it. Now, this is an example of censorship purely for image. It's got nothing to do with anything military, and I found that far beyond the rules.²¹⁸

Amanpour's distaste for the pool system did not stop her from filing compelling stories that brought her more viewers and a following. She felt the restrictions from the Pentagon "forced some of us to break rules and do things that maybe we wouldn't have done had we had normal access."²¹⁹ Censorship or even just the threat of it made the journalists go farther in looking for stories in places they maybe shouldn't have, causing some harm or capture. But most reporters just wanted to complete their work with little interference. "Viewers are poorer when we journalists are not able to bring them full, accurate, proper stories in all their aspects, military and human. There always is a balance between what the military wants and needs and is entitled to, and what we, as journalists in a free society, are also entitled to," she writes. However, like Bourke-White and Chapelle, when a reporter or photographer joins the military as an embedded journalist or joins a pool, certain rights are surrendered to gain protection and access to

²¹⁸ Ferrari 211.

²¹⁹ Ferrari 211.

troops and the battlefield. It is then the journalist's duty to seek the truth in other ways, accepting that censorship will be part of the game.

Following her coverage of the Persian Gulf War, Amanpour completed award-winning reporting on the atrocities in Sarajevo during the Bosnia war, where more than 200,000 Bosnians were killed.²²⁰ Through coverage of this incident and others, Amanpour has earned the Television Academy Honor, nine News and Documentary Emmy Awards, four George Foster Peabody Awards and two George Polk Awards among others. In Sarajevo, she found that she wanted to tell the story of these survivors and their families to the outside world. "Clearly, there is the drama, danger and immediacy," she said. "But you also see the very best and very worst of human nature."²²¹ On reporting the stories of these people, she saw citizens who "did not lose their values, their hopes, their humanity."²²² She felt that these stories would lead to greater action by the world community, and if they didn't, she would help advocate for it.

Criticism

This perhaps has been her greatest criticism, that she does not always stick to reporting only the facts, but that she adds her own agenda as some say. In 1997, Amanpour wrote an article in the Harvard International Review on the United States as the "Reluctant Superpower" (the article's title) and argued that the United States' failures to engage in conflict earlier to help the weak of the world in Bosnia and Somalia ended in

²²⁰ "History of the War in Bosnia," Center for Balkan Development/Friends of Bosnia, May 1996, 18 Apr. 2012 <http://www.balkandevlopment.org/edu_bos.html>.

²²¹ Schmitt

²²² Schmitt

disaster that hurts the military.²²³ But critics question if she brings her political bias into focus too much on camera. *New York Times* writer Stephen Kinzer wrote in 1994, “She was sitting in Belgrade when that marketplace massacre happened, and she went on the air to say that the Serbs had probably done it. There was no way she could have known that. She was assuming an omniscience which no journalist has.”²²⁴ As of 1999, it had been reported by the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMEREA) that Amanpour had not cleared this up for viewers. Could it be the mistake of breaking news cycles? Or if she made a mistake, did she not want to fix it on air and appear to be wrong?

Critics have accused Amanpour of being out of line when she challenged then President Bill Clinton to respond to the Bosnian and Serbian conflict, and noted that her reporting seemed to cover only Serbians as committing atrocities against civilians when both sides in fact committed atrocities in the War. Amanpour replied to their challenges and criticisms with her own view of how journalism works in the modern age:

It drives me crazy when this neutrality thing comes up. Objectivity, that great journalistic buzz-word, means giving all sides a fair hearing – not treating all sides the same – particularly when all sides are not the same. When you’re neutral in a situation like Bosnia, you are an accomplice – an accomplice to genocide.

She would go on to say:

When our world leaders wanted to shrug away and call it a terrible civil war for which all sides were guilty, we said, “No.” Genocide against Muslims in Europe was being committed and this had to be stopped.

²²³ Christiane Amanpour, "Reluctant Superpower," *Harvard International Review* 20.1 (1997): 96-98. EBSCO Host: Reluctant Superpower, EBSCOhost 18 Apr. 2012.

²²⁴ Steven Stotsky, "CAMERA: Television Media Outlets," CAMERA: Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, 4 Oct. 2007, 18 Apr. 2012 <http://www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=3>.

To her, writing about what harms the world is the only way to help it. Amanpour, no matter where she was in the world, always sought to cover stories that resonated in a person watching her segments. She had a mission, and she didn't mind if her critics disagreed, as long as she was still deemed successful by her editors:

I've always had one goal in mind, and it's not the trite goal of "the people's right to know." I really believe, from the bottom of my heart, that many of the stories that I am assigned to cover are of vital importance. And without that kind of information, people are simply poorer off....I've always tried to report the human side of whatever I'm reporting, whether it's a famine or a war or a political crisis, not just to be wrapped up in high-tech gadgets and gizmos. I've always tried to [show] how it affects ordinary men, women, and children.²²⁵

But even if she had many critics, she was most loved by executives of CNN.

When she entered contract negotiations in 1994, CNN offered her "about \$1 million...making her the network's highest-paid correspondent."²²⁶ In 1996, the major networks were vying for her as well. Her following of viewers, along with a clear knowledge of obtaining stories that spoke to viewers on a personal level, put her in demand in broadcasting, "One, she's a woman; two, she has an accent, and three, she's gutsy," said media critic Marvin Kalb.²²⁷ Compared to Bourke-White, Irwin and Chapelle, and to an extent even Cockburn, being a woman was no longer a handicap in the journalism game. It was a way to hold all the cards in the 1990s. A new journalism era had begun, one in which women were no longer told they were not good enough. It was expected they would be out in the field reporting, and men would need to keep up.

²²⁵ Ferrari 217.

²²⁶ "The Wooing Of Amanpour," *Newsweek/Daily Beast*, 19 May 1996, 18 Apr. 2012
<<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/1996/05/19/the-wooing-of-amanpour.html>>.

²²⁷ "The Wooing Of Amanpour"

Following the Bosnian Conflict, Amanpour's role at CNN began changing more. She still travelled the world reporting, but with her personal life transforming, she would take on different tasks – and interview more leaders instead of covering conflicts. In 1998, she married James Rubin, the former U.S. States Department spokesman under President Clinton. Two years later, they had their first son, Darius.²²⁸ Amanpour remarked that motherhood has influenced her professional life in many ways including not wanting to be away from her son, but yet wanting to report on the issues of the world to make it better as well:

It made me more sensitive, perhaps, to the plight of children out there, and to the depths of the humanitarian woes that are out there. But it's also made it more difficult. I don't want to be away from my son and I think every mother understands that. And so it has made it more difficult. But I strongly believe that – I really do, and I don't think it's just professional nonsense or self-serving, you know, claptrap – I strongly believe that the strong democracy and a strong society needs a strong, independent, fair and rigorous class of journalists, a professional class.²²⁹

Like Cockburn, motherhood has not stopped Amanpour but has changed how she conducts work. She is still out reporting from dangerous places, but she says she has guilt about leaving her child. There is a pressure to prove that the pregnancy and baby did not affect work and won't in the future. "I took three months' maternity leave and that is, looking back, something I would have done differently. Had I been a little less full of bravado and less determined to prove that I could do it all, I would have taken much longer off," she wrote.²³⁰ Again, the mother is making sacrifices to find fulfillment in

²²⁸ White

²²⁹ Lesley Stahl, "The Lesley Stahl Interview: Christiane Amanpour, at the Height of the Iranian Election Crisis," The Women on the Net Inc, 23 June 2009, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.wowowow.com/point-of-view/the-lesley-stahl-interview-christiane-amanpour-at-the-height-of-the-iranian-election-crisis/>>.

²³⁰ Julie Ferry, "'What We Do Is Really Tough'" The Guardian, 14 Aug. 2007, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2007/aug/15/television>>.

both her career and personal life. This stress is noticed more by women in the journalism field than it seems to ever be discussed by men.

Amanpour has been long noted as being able to interview the most difficult leaders of the world to reach. In 2002, she interviewed Palestinian President Yasser Arafat from his headquarters by phone as he was locked down in Ramallah. He hung up on her after she questioned his ability to stop the violence surrounding him.²³¹ During the Arab Spring in 2011, she was the only reporter to interview Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak at his palace.²³² She even chatted with the Dalai Lama in 2008 to discuss the “Chinese’s cultural genocide” of his people.²³³ With so many contacts and experiences at CNN, it was noteworthy when in 2010, after 27 years of CNN; she announced she would step down as the cable network’s chief international correspondent to host “This Week” at ABC. In addition, her job went from reporting the news to more analysis of the news as the global affairs anchor for the network.²³⁴ Hosting this show ended in 2011. Amanpour returned to CNN in dual roles with both networks. She was able to stipulate these terms in her contract. She hosts “Amanpour” on CNN International, starting in April 2012.²³⁵

²³¹ "Israeli Troops Surround Arafat Compound," CNN.com - Transcripts, 29 Mar. 2002, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0203/29/bn.26.html>>.

²³² Liz Smith "Liz Smith: Christiane Amanpour - ABC Newswoman of the Hour!" The Women on the Net Inc., 8 Feb. 2011, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.wowowow.com/liz-smith/liz-smith-christiane-amanpour-abc-newswoman-of-the-hour/>>.

²³³ Christiane Amanpour, "Buddha's Warriors," Amanpour - CNN.com Blogs, CNN.com, 13 Apr. 2012, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://amanpour.blogs.cnn.com/category/amanpour-archive/>>.

²³⁴ "Christiane Amanpour's Biography," ABC News Network, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://abcnews.go.com/ThisWeek/christiane-amanpour/biography-anchor-week-christiane-amanpour/story?id=11208824>>.

²³⁵ http://www.cnn.com/CNN/anchors_reporters/amanpour.christiane.html?iref=allsearch

CONCLUSION

These five women represent the many women war correspondents throughout the ages. While not all can be accounted for in these pages, there are certain commonalities that are shared among women who would risk their lives to make sure the public knows as much as possible about how the U.S. military and government conducts themselves in war and conflict.

First, each had to prove to a man, whether in the military or even her own editors, that she was capable of the job. In addition, there seems to be a pushback from editors, officials and soldiers that women will not be safe and cannot handle the work being a war correspondent. Margaret Bourke-White sought approval of her pictures from Benjamin Moskowitz at the architectural firm. She also encountered pushback when she went to take pictures of the steel mills. Dickey Chapelle's husband and his military colleagues were so worried about her on missions, that they created extra work for themselves by going out to watch over her believing she would not be safe on her own. Virginia Irwin was told that women were not war correspondents in World War II, yet she didn't let that stop her. She joined the America Red Cross to get to London and then started reporting stories so good that her editors would print them on page one. In addition, Leslie Cockburn started as the only woman correspondent in the NBC newsroom in London. It cost her work relationships as she succeeded. These women needed to find their own way and show the men that it would be done by a woman. There were no threats, dramatic arguments or demonstrations. Each quietly went about doing her work, pushing the boundaries and succeeding when it mattered most on the field.

Second, each woman succeeded even though she had a lack of training in either journalism or military endeavors. As Aukofer and Lawrence suggest in their book, *America's Team: The Odd Couple, A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military*, "The Armed Forces should continue efforts to expand news media training as part of field-training exercises and war games..."²³⁶ Bourke-White, Irwin, Chapelle, and Cockburn learned both how to be a journalist, but also how to maneuver in a warzone on the job. There was no formal system in place for each to go through any training to learn how the military acted as it did. None was able to learn why weapons were used in some areas but not others until she was on assignment and asking the military men in her presence. In today's world this is even more important, as seen by the example of Lisa Logan in Egypt. As today's situations seem more dangerous and unpredictable, one needs to know about how to take care of herself and stay out of harm's way. New classes are being offered by NBC News to its journalists on how to protect oneself in conflict zones.²³⁷ However, more work needs to be done to prepare journalists for the trials of conflict and how to endure when faced with dangerous situations.

Third, each of these women had to give up parts of her family life to be able to have this type of job. In some cases, such as Bourke-White and Chapelle, the stress of career versus wife led to divorce. The marriages could not withstand the pressure of these two women wanting to succeed and travel the world. It could be said that in these cases the men were weaker than the women in personality or could not deal with their success as well. Bourke-White's first husband left after his mother became upset with

²³⁶ Frank Aukofer and William P. Lawrence, *America's Team: The Odd Couple: A Report on the Relationship between the Media and the Military* (Nashville: Freedom Forum, 1995) 7.

²³⁷ Emily Wax, "INSI: Female Journalists Face Sexual Threats Abroad, Report Says," INSI: International News Safety Institute, 2011, 18 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.newssafety.org/page.php?page=20071>>.

her. Her second husband wanted to make movies in Hollywood at the expense of Bourke-White's career and that the "long separations due to her war work made him too lonely."²³⁸ Cockburn and Amanpour gave up time with their children to work long weeks overseas on stories. Each bemoaned that they had returned to work too soon following the birth of a child, but each seemed to have something to prove. There seems to be a psychological tendency among these women to prove that they can do it all. Be a wife, a mother, a war correspondent. Cockburn and Amanpour both wrote of the guilt that they felt at being away, yet neither seemed to be able to be away from their work as well. Cockburn wrote that she was back in the office three weeks after her first daughter was born. Amanpour only took three months off following her son's birth. Both travelled extensively while in their prime as war correspondents.

Fourth, all five women encountered dangerous conditions while working in conflict zones. Yet, none let this convince them to stop. In fact, sometimes it seemed to give them fearless and reckless ideas. When Iraqi Scud missiles were attacking Tel Aviv, Cockburn was on the roof of the hotel taking pictures instead of in a bunker room with everyone else. When a Japanese bomber threatened the medical ship taking Chapelle to Iwo Jima, she climbed the highest part of the ship to take pictures. Irwin drove straight into occupied Berlin to report the end of World War II. These women were all dedicated to getting the story, no matter the cost. At times they were even willing to break the rules and ask for forgiveness later if that would give them the best scoop or location. Each had a remarkable knack for adapting to whatever situation was thrown at them and turning it into a great story.

²³⁸ Rubin 70.

Finally, each woman encountered censorship from the military. This has been part of the tension between military and media for centuries:

When two institutions meet during a conflict, clashes are inevitable. The press wants to tell the story, and the military wants to win the war and keep casualties to a minimum. The press wants freedom, and the military wants control. Those are fundamental differences that will never change.²³⁹

Amanpour saw censorship in the press pools during Desert Storm, as the military attempted to control its message more than ever. Cockburn was censored and even blacklisted for what she documented for *60 Minutes* during the Nicaragua Contra scandal. Irwin's amazing story of Berlin's liberation from the Nazis was buried for weeks at SHAEF's headquarters due to military officials upset with how she got access to the city. It seems as if sometimes censorship is more to penalize a person than to control the message. However, in cases like Amanpour's, she had to give up certain rights to receive access to parts of the military. At that point the military can dictate what to do or how to file a story. Bourke-White and Chapelle encountered the same thing to gain access in World War II and later in Vietnam for Chapelle. Media will always have to balance how much they want access with the military versus how much they are willing to give up to report the story. If the journalists deem it too intrusive to censor stories, they will have to forgo embedded reporters. This is known as "unilateral." Unilaterals find their way around a combat zone on their own. Amanpour was both embedded and an unilateral during the 2003 Iraqi War. She commented about her experience and the difference between the two:

²³⁹ Aukofer and Lawrence vii.

Pools are controlled and supervised methods of reporting. Now, in previous instances, the pools mean a small and restricted group of people. In this instance, it's meant a massive group of people. Nonetheless, they're still operating under varying degrees of restriction. Now, many of the reporters will say, and I believe them, that they got very good, close-up, honest access to the people they were with. But the fact of the matter is that they didn't get the whole picture. Nobody's going to get the whole picture all the time. But what did we see and what did we get? Very good, dramatic coverage, but also a big lack of [reporting] of what happened to the other side.

There's just one problem with the unilateral situation, and that is that it's very dangerous, especially in wars that are so high-tech and rapid, such as this last one.²⁴⁰

Going forward both methods will continue to be used. This is where specific training on conflict preparedness is needed for correspondents, especially for those who want to travel to an area of the world where the conflict does not involve the U.S. military directly. It is imperative that these reporters remain as safe as possible while seeking the story.

Technology has changed censorship in recent years. Bourke-White sent her film to her New York office or flew to neutral territory to develop her photographs. Irwin's dispatches needed to be telegraphed through the military lines to the *Post-Dispatch*. There was always a delay caused by technology or the censors' use of technology. With modern technology, this had changed. Reporters can use phones as computers and instantly upload to any web site content to be dispersed as an editor sees fit. In addition, small phones, video cameras and computers are being used by civilians to capture the story for the reporters to use or reference in their stories. The military cannot get around this. Social media allows that people can communicate across country borders and some

²⁴⁰ Ferrari 221.

information will be leaked to the military's dismay. This change means that the access from the military will change and it will need to rethink its censorship strategy.

Women war correspondents have come a long way from Bourke-White and Irwin barging through roadblocks that men put in their way to Amanpour as the highest paid foreign correspondent on broadcast news. However, this doesn't mean that women can be apathetic to the progress. There will always be battles to be fought back in the newsroom, in the military pools, and in the media itself. Chauvinistic tendencies do not go away over night, but neither have strong, independent women who want to report on the truth in the world as they see it. These women will continue to encounter the same problems that these five women did, little advancement opportunity, guilt over leaving family behind, low earnings over a lifetime. The book *Women Don't Ask* anticipates a \$300,000 lifetime wage disparity between men and women because of motherhood and women not wanting to "rock the boat."²⁴¹ Women war correspondents of the future will have to push just as many doors open as the women of the past. But by nature, they have it in them. There is a drive, a certainty in conviction that women war correspondents have between them and they won't stop until they prove that to the world.

²⁴¹ Jean Chatzky, "The Motherhood Penalty," *Wowowow — A New Way for Women to Talk Culture, Politics & Gossip*, The Women on the Net Inc., 12 Aug. 2010, 18 Apr. 2012
<<http://www.wowowow.com/money/the-motherhood-penalty/>>.

APPENDIX

Journalists Deaths
(1992-2012)
Committee to Protect Journalists

Year	Women Journalists	Men Journalists
1992	1	43
1993	5	51
1994	4	62
1995	7	44
1996	3	23
1997	0	26
1998	2	22
1999	0	36
2000	0	24
2001	2	35
2002	1	20
2003	1	41
2004	3	57
2005	8	40
2006	8	49
2007	4	65
2008	1	41
2009	9	65
2010	0	44
2011	1	46
2012	1	10
Totals	61	844

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